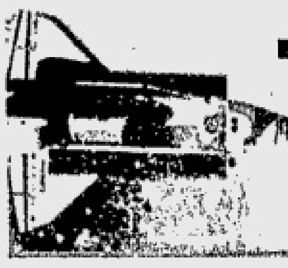


■ World / A9

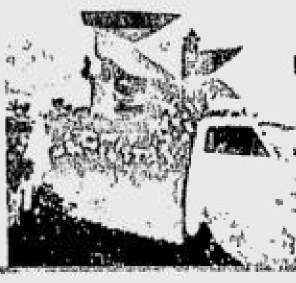
Bad weather delays landing of shuttle

■ Entertainment / A21

Did La Aunor beat Swank, Ziyi in US film fest?

■ Business / B1

Gov't pushes for LPG use in transport



■ News / A2

'Go Raul, warrior-lawyer, great lover'

Ramos suggests 16-hour workday for lawmakers

ISABAY SABAY NA SA PAG BABA?

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

HOLD morning sessions and work 16 hours a day. Skip dinner meetings; make do with "*pandesal*" and coffee. Cut other frills. Avoid too many vacation breaks.

RAMOS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Palace releases P5-B in road funds to solons

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AS THE opposition gathers signatures for an impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo, Malacañang is releasing a total of P5.1 billion to members of the House of Representatives for the maintenance of roads across the country.

PALACE/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Tuesday, August 9, 2005 ★★ 36 pages / 3 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 242 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Opposition loses another witness

But intel officer readied to back Zuce testimony

"JUETENG" witness Demosthenes Abraham "Abe" Rivera (right) follows in the footsteps of Richard Garcia (left). ERIK ARAZAS

COMELEC Chair Benjamin Abalos (right) orders the arrest of Mayor Muslimin Makabato (left) of Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, for preventing the distribution of ARMM election paraphernalia and delaying the voting in his town. LYN RILLON

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DEMOSTHENES Abraham Riva's "I am sorry" to President Macapagal-Arroyo before television cameras yesterday had a familiar confused ring to it.

It appeared to echo Richard Garcia's mea culpa last week, seemingly recanting the latter's testimony before the Senate hearings on "jueteng" implicating the First Family in illegal gambling payoffs but at the same time standing by it.

"Madam President, I am sorry I dragged you into this," said Riva, who had said he was a jueteng bagman for former presidential assistant Mario Espinosa.

Riva, the second witness to abandon antijueteng crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz, had testified before a Senate hearing on jueteng two months ago that Espinosa had told him he had the blessing of Jose Miguel Arroyo to operate the illegal lottery in Bicol.

Riva insisted he was not retracting his testimony against Espinosa. "This is between me and Espinosa. He just used the name of the First Gentleman."

"The First Family had nothing to do with jueteng," Riva said. He said he wasn't aware that his testimony would be used against Ms Arroyo, who is battling for political survival over allegations of vote fraud and jueteng payoffs.

Like Garcia, Riva said he had suffered enough and did not wish to be involved anymore in the antijueteng crusade that Cruz had

OPPOSITION / A5

'Witness Prevention Program' hit

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE ADMINISTRATION has a "Witness Prevention Program," according to legislators pushing for the impeachment of President Macapagal-Arroyo. But an administration lawmaker countered that the opposition was running a "Philippine Witness Academy."

The charges and countercharges came amid retractions by witnesses, who had earlier linked members of the First Family to "jueteng" or who had wanted to corroborate the accounts of other witnesses, who claimed election officials had received jueteng money in the President's home.

Even so, the opposition claimed it had more witnesses who would link the President to election fraud and illegal gambling.

Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Cayetano said that in lieu of the Witness Protection Program (WPP), which is under the Department of Justice, the administration was using a so-called "Witness Prevention Program" to harass or pirate the impeachment witnesses of the opposition.

"Apparently, this witness prevention program is well funded compared to the (DOJ's WPP)," said Cayetano at a press conference.

He said that "witnesses" under this new program were offered livelihood and housing benefits, besides the usual allowances.

The lawmaker said the real WPP did not have such perks. "Pa-Chippy, Chippy *lang ang*

WITNESS/ A5

ARMM polls 'abnormally' peaceful

By PDI Mindanao Bureau

BY THE account of one poll official, yesterday's elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao were abnormal.

"Abnormal because it was generally peaceful," said Commissioner Florentino Tuazon Jr., who was in charge of the polls in Maguindanao.

Also, "this time, not a single bloody and violent incident was reported," according to Tuazon.

Tell that to some school teachers in Tuburan, Basilan.

There, gunmen reportedly grabbed still unfilled ballots in the teachers' custody and, after an hour, returned them already filled and stuffed them into the ballot boxes.

"Only one of them came in. He had a .45 [pistol] ... The others were outside," school teacher Sangada la Peña recounted to GMA 7 Network last night.

Talking between sobs, La Peña said she was so scared she could not look at the gunman.

Another poll worker, Salim Mustafa, said there was no point resisting.

"They had guns so I said, 'No problem.' I can't lay down my life. This is just work. There was nothing we could do. We have

ARMM POLLS/ A6

Expert says federalism better for Bangsamoro

By Norman Bordadora

THE WELFARE and future of the Bangsamoro people would be better served in a federal state of their own rather than by the current Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, an expert on federal affairs said yesterday.

Dr. Jose Abueva, former University of the Philippines president and chief adviser of the Citizens' Movement for a Federal Philippines, said a Bangsamoro federal state—one of 11 proposed federal states under an amended Constitution—would have more means to achieve self-determination than the ARMM system.

"The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is a misnomer because it was never really autonomous," Abueva told the INQUIRER.

"We can't use [the experience of the ARMM] as a standard of how the proposed federal states would fare under a federal government," he added.

Abueva was reacting to a suggestion that the alleged failure of the ARMM to make lives better for the Bangsamoro people in its constituent provinces of Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Tawi-Tawi and Sulu might also happen in a federal setup under a revised Constitution.

"Take funding for instance. Its funding is still subject to control by the national government," Abueva said.

Noting that the ARMM is composed of some of the poorest provinces in the country, Abueva said: "We need to federate resources [from the provinces] for themselves. Suppose we discover oil in Sulu, the bulk of the revenues should go to the [federal state]," he said.

Much of the revenues from gold and other mineral explorations do not redound to the benefit of the localities hosting such enormous economic activities, he said.

Abueva said that apart from being allowed to control revenue from these areas, the Bangsamoro federal state would be entitled to "grants-in-aid" from the federal government, or the national authority in Manila.

"A federal [state] is entitled to federal grants-in-aid, [especially] the ARMM that needs more re-

EXPERT/ A6

SUSAN Roces lights a candle at the People Power Monument for the "undecided" lawmakers. JOAN BONDOC

79 BURNING CANDLES

Susan, lawmakers pray for impeach signatures

By Philip C. Tubeza

IT TOOK some time for Susan Roces and other opposition stalwarts to light 79 candles—the magic number required to set in motion the impeachment trial of President Macapagal-Arroyo on election fraud charges.

Wind and rain under a somber sky whipped the People Power Monument on Edsa at noon yesterday as around 30 people gathered at a makeshift altar for an inter-faith service to pray for a fair and credible impeachment process.

Party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) observed that lighting the candles was like the struggle in the House of Representatives to get the 79 signatures—one-third of its membership of 236—to bring the impeachment case to trial in the Senate.

"I pray that those who are still undecided would decide so that we could proceed with the impeachment process because we are trying to exhaust all legal means. We are trying to do it the legal way and this is the only way left," said Roces.

The widow of the late opposition presidential candidate and actor Fernando Poe Jr. joined the Edsa crowd two days before the start of the impeachment hearings in the House on three complaints filed against Ms Arroyo. The complaints accuse the President of culpable violation of the Constitution, corruption and fraud in connection with last year's election.

At least 41 lawmakers have signed the impeachment complaint, still way short of the magic number.

Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros said the odds of impeaching the President appeared "to be so great that it will take a miracle to pull it off" in the Arroyo-controlled Congress.

"More fundamental than the

SUSAN/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will be cloudy, with rains becoming frequent over the western sections. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/08/09/05

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

'Go Raul, warrior-lawyer, great lover'

By Michael Lim Ubac, Nikko Dizon and TJ Burgonio

"GO RAUL. Let the angels bring you to eternal life."

With these words, Sonia Malasarte-Roco bade her husband Raul farewell during necrological services lasting till after midnight on Sunday.

He was a "warrior-lawyer" and "great lover" who labored all his life to bring "heaven" to this country, Sonia told the throng of supporters and friends gathered at the Maria Della Strada Parish church on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City.

She was amazed by all the "good words that were said and written" about her husband.

"I'm moved by the outpouring of love," Sonia said, stressing that Roco had shown "many sides" of himself to a lot of people "but his is a life well-lived."

In his eulogy, Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya said Roco was a "Sistine Chapel of law-making," while lawyer Troy Luna, managing partner of Roco, Kapunan, Migallos and Luna Law Offices said, "We lost him 19 years ago to Camarines Sur, then to the nation. Now we've lost him in death."

Hermie Aquino, Roco's running mate in the 2004 presidential race, said that Roco had refused to withdraw from the race because he wanted "to give the Filipino people a choice."

Yesterday morning after Mass, a small party composed of Roco's family, the Senate staff and friends led by former running mate Aquino and businessman Jose Concepcion proceeded to the Anscor hangar at the General Aviation Area of the Manila International Airport Authority for the send-off to Naga City.

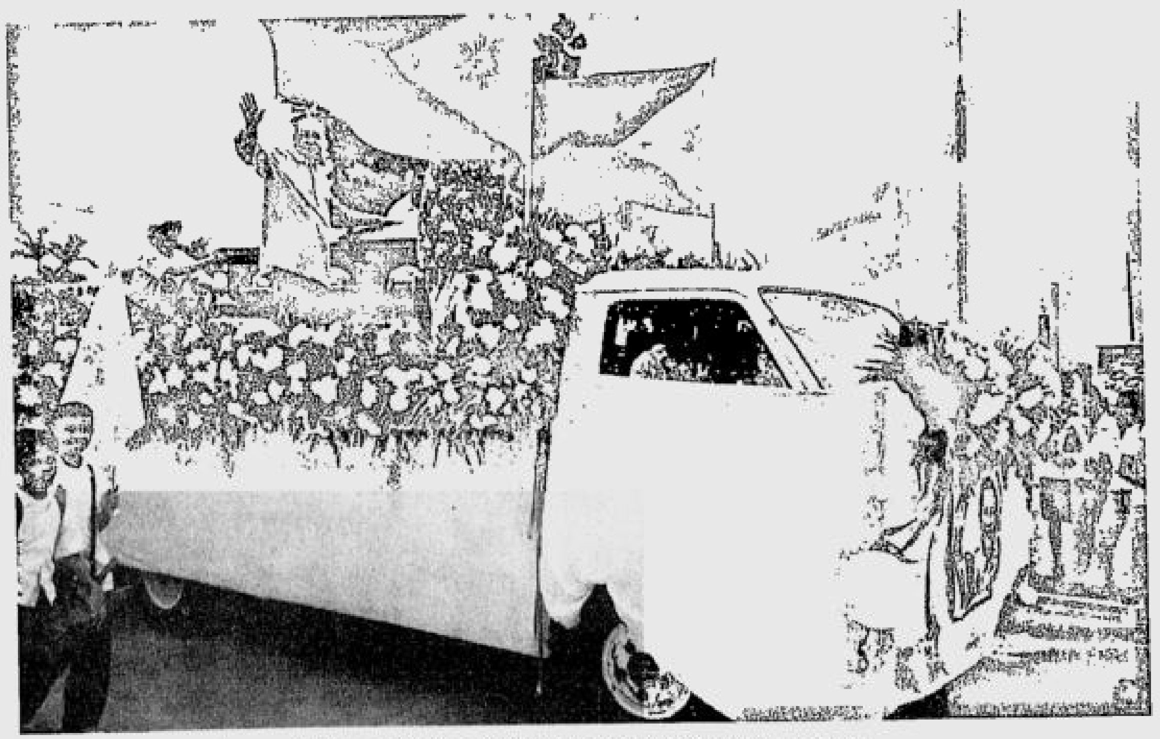
His grieving widow Sonia remained a picture of strength and grace.

"I am OK. I look OK. We still have three days in Naga," she told reporters as she prepared to board the chartered light plane that would bring the body of her husband to his hometown of Naga City at noon yesterday.

Roco, who succumbed to a year-long battle with prostate cancer on Aug. 5, will be buried on Thursday beside his father's grave at the Sto. Niño Memorial Park in Naga.

"We're happy he's at peace," Sonia said.

Amid a light rain and softly blowing wind, the blue-green casket carrying the remains of Roco — touted as the best President the country never had — was loaded on the plane that would bring him back to the province of his birth.



RAUL Roco comes home to Naga City to a warm welcome from his townmates.

NIÑO ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Simplicity and near privacy marked the send-off prepared by the Senate for Roco.

In lieu of necrological rites at the Senate, modest planeside honors were held for the former senator.

Philippine National Police (PNP) honor guards stood on each side as the flag draped on Roco's casket was folded and handed by Senate President Franklin Drilon to Sonia.

"We lost one of the most respected leaders of our country. His voice would always be listened to, his reasoned advice people will look for, and we will miss that reasoned counsel of Senator Roco," Drilon told reporters shortly after the plane took off.

The senators yesterday skipped necrological rites at the Senate for Roco at his family's request, but they kept the long-held tradition of adjourning early in deference to his death.

The brief session was devoted entirely to Roco with Drilon leading the prayer for the former senator, and the senators later unanimously passing a resolution expressing their "profound sympathy" to his family.

Drilon explained that the chamber was pressed for time to hold the traditional necrological services because Roco's mother was waiting for his remains in Naga City.

After the resolution was read, Sen. Joker Arroyo moved that the chamber adjourn. Nobody raised an objection.

Out of respect for Roco, Arroyo, a town mate of the late senator, appealed for a moratorium on political bickering.

I did not snub Rocos, says Bunye

PRESS Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday made it clear that he did not leave the wake of former Sen. Raul Roco on Saturday without condoling with any member of the family, as reported by the INQUIRER.

Bunye told the INQUIRER he went to the Maria Della Strada Parish church on Katipunan Ave. in Quezon City where Roco's remains were lying in state on Saturday to pay his last respects to the former senator. But contrary to the INQUIRER report, he did not attend the morning Mass but was at the church when Roco's casket was transferred from the small chapel.

It was at this time, the press secretary said, that Roco's daughter Pia approached him and they exchanged pleasantries. He said he knew Pia from the time they met in Brussels years ago.

Later, he said, he was able to talk to Roco's widow Sonia, who thanked him for the "kind words" from Malacañang on her late husband who died after a lingering illness last week.

"Why would I go then (to the wake) if I was just going to snub the family?" Bunye said. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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UP's 'best minds' present 'blueprint'

By DJ Yap

SOME of the best minds from the University of the Philippines gathered their best ideas and came up with a "blueprint for a viable Philippines," hoping to resolve the country's troubles.

The group of academics and civil society leaders, led by former UP president Francisco Nemenzo Jr., recommended the shift to "a simplified, universal and equitable gross taxation system," the modernization of the agriculture and service sectors, the negotiation for a five-year relief on interest payments for foreign debt, and the doubling or tripling of the education budget.

The blueprint, however, made no direct reference to the "Gloriagate" scandal, which has dominated political discussions in the past several weeks.

Instead, Nemenzo said political parties and social movements were welcome to adopt the group's suggestions, as he was "painfully aware that ideas are worthless without the power to implement them."

Highlights of the blueprint, which came after some 20 roundtable discussions with various political stakeholders, were presented yesterday during a forum organized by the Office of the President, the Third World Studies Center and the League of College Councils, all of the UP.

The group said: "If we are serious about changing our form of government, we should first prepare the ground on which the new forms could grow. For example, an effective parliamentary system requires the participation of mature political parties that are not dominated by strong personalities and dynasties."

The blueprint also addressed the debt problem, saying the government should initiate a debt audit to uncover the "hidden history of our indebtedness and assign responsibility for this national burden."

According to the proponents, the government should also negotiate for a minimum of five year's relief from interest payments to give itself sufficient space to attend to the very poor.

On the population issue, the group proposed a population policy based on the "safest and most effective means available" and invited the Catholic Church to a dialogue.

The blueprint also recommended the purging of scalawags in the police and military establishments and the creation of a modern transport system. A new education curriculum that is "strong in history and culture to foster patriotic and social values and nurture a strong sense of national identity" should also be developed.

Aside from Nemenzo, other proponents of the blueprint were Renato Constantino Jr., Prof. Randy David, former UP Diliman chancellor Roger Posadas, Isagani Serrano of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and Marivic Raquiza of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty-Philippines.

More rains expected

THE WEATHER bureau Pagasa yesterday spotted two low pressure areas – one 340 kms east of the Ilocos region and the other 790 kms east of Bicol – as the southwest monsoon continued to bring rains and thunderstorms to Luzon and the Visayas.

Pagasa weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz told the INQUIRER that apart from the possibility of developing into stronger weather disturbances such as tropical depressions or even typhoons, the two low pressure areas, though "still shallow," would bring more rains today.

"The mere presence of these low pressure areas will cause more cloudiness, rains and winds as they interact with the southwest monsoon. This interaction will cause rains, particularly in the western part of Luzon and the Visayas," Cruz said.

Cruz warned that winds would be stronger in the seas west of Luzon and the Visayas.

"Sometimes we tend to overlook the fact that these weather conditions are more strongly felt at sea. Warnings are all the more necessary for those at sea," he said.

Typhoon Gorio left the country before the weekend but the rains seemed to pour harder after it left.

"People [have been] asking why the rains [kept] coming even after the typhoon had left. The reason for this is that the effects of the southwest monsoon are being enhanced as the typhoon gets to northern Philippines (and onward)," Cruz said. *Norman Bordadora*

Domestic airport tax up 100% next month

By Nikko Dizon

STARTING Sept. 1, passengers taking domestic flights will pay P200 in "airport tax" at the Manila Domestic Airport and the Centennial Terminal.

The 100-percent increase in domestic terminal fee will mean an additional P300-million income for the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa).

In a statement yesterday, Miaa general manager Alfonso Cusi described the increase as "long overdue."

The current P100 airport tax was implemented in 1998.

The increase was approved by the Miaa board of directors and discussed in two public hearings. Cusi said the decision was also published in newspapers of general circulation as mandated by law.

Cusi said the additional revenue would be used to build a greeter's area at the old domestic terminal's parking area, canopies and covered walks.

From the P200 airport tax, P30 would go to the Bureau of Treasury to fund the government's aviation security programs, Miaa said.

Last year, Miaa collected P320.62 million in airport tax from 6.74 million passengers who used the Naia Centennial Terminal and the old domestic terminal.

Passenger traffic in the first six months of 2005 stood at 3.6 million at both terminals. A total of P174.35 million was collected over the same period.

The domestic airport tax collection comprises six percent of the Miaa's annual gross income.

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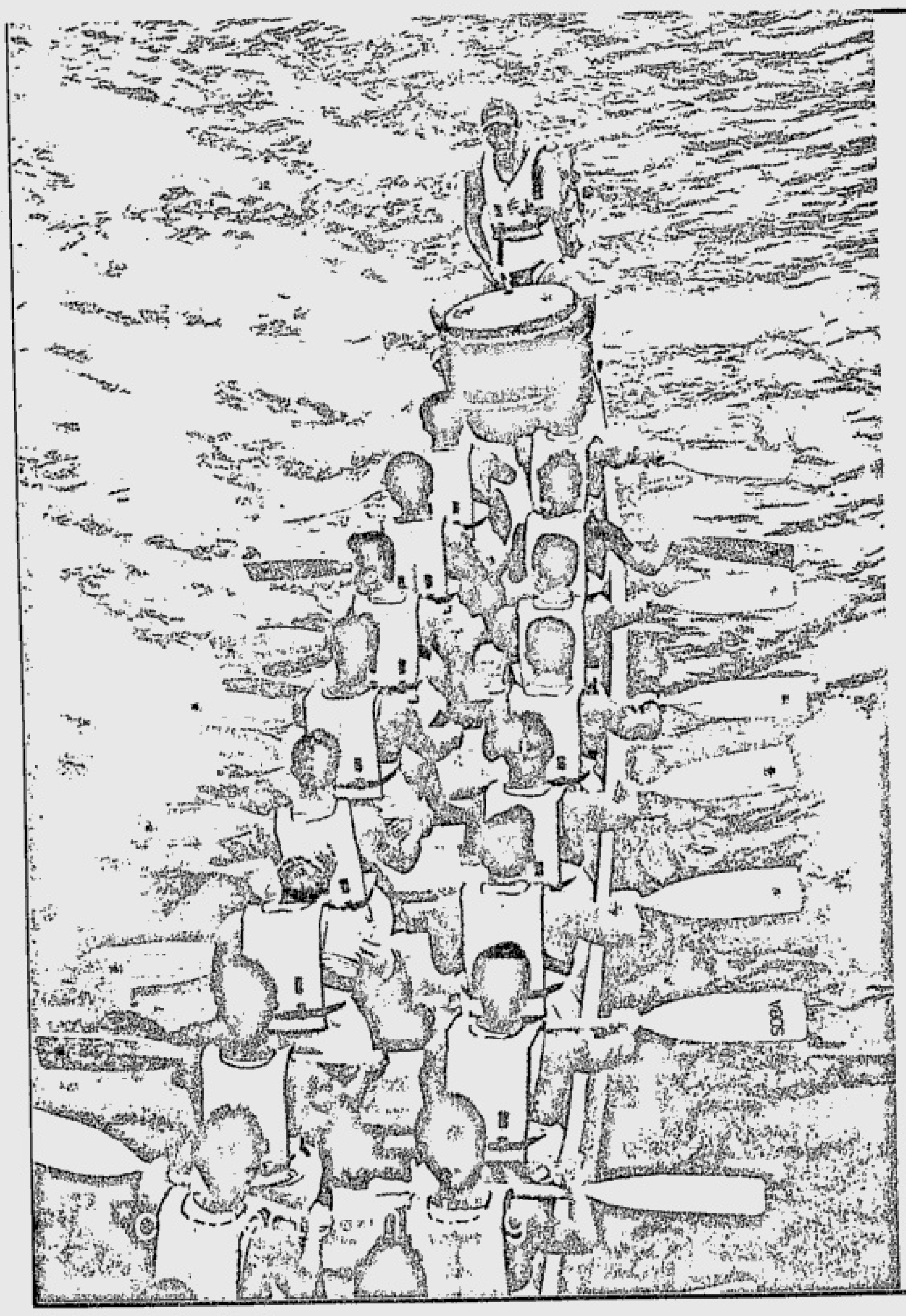

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Susan, lawmakers . . .

From page A1

possibility of gathering the much-needed signatures for the impeachment complaint is the widespread doubt in the capacity and integrity of Congress to perform its duty as a fiscalizer to the executive [branch]," Hontiveros said.

"For many, if Congress can't even be trusted to craft laws that promote the interests of the people, it shouldn't be surprising if Filipinos doubt that Congress can organize a believable impeachment process," she added.

Other lawmakers present at Edsa were Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman, Ave Rep. Eulogio Magsaysay, Batanes Rep. Henedina Abad and Akbayan Rep. Mario Aguja.

Finding the truth

"I am here to join our lawmakers in their prayers that they would be guided by the teachings of God, their love for our country, and the memory that our ancestors fought for the rights of our countrymen," the 64-year-old Roces said.

"I know that they would start looking into the things that would reveal to us the whole truth—the truth about what happened in the last elections where we should have had credible results," she added.

"For our lawmakers who will start their inquiry to find the truth about the 2004 elections, I offer them my prayers for them to remain strong in their principles and convictions."

Rosales implored her colleagues not to allow partisan politics to mar the impeachment proceedings.

"No significant and strategic solution to this political crisis will be achieved if public officials will use the powers of our institutions to protect and promote partisan interests," she said.

Credibility at stake

"The impeachment of President GMA is a necessary step toward that direction," Rosales added.

Aguja warned that a highly questionable impeachment process would serve as "the last nail on the credibility of Congress as an independent institution."

"As we have witnessed during Edsa II, if Congress fails to deliver a speedy and convincing impeachment process, the parliament of the streets has the legitimacy and sovereignty to unearth the truth and dispense justice," he said.

More prayers are expected to be offered today with a "Mass for Truth and Justice" to be held in Congress.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the Mass, to be celebrated by Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias, would gather the impeachment complainants, including congressmen and people's organizations.

Other groups organized

Also yesterday, organizers announced the formation of two groups seeking Ms Arroyo's resignation or impeachment. Most of their members were pro-democracy activists who joined the 2001 "people power" revolt that swept Ms Arroyo to power.

They said they were willing to go back to the streets if the President's followers subvert the impeachment process.

"We're prepared for that. We're veterans," said Elizabeth Yang, who joined the 2001 revolt that ousted Joseph Estrada over corruption allegations and actively campaigned for Ms Arroyo in last year's closely fought elections.

Yang helped organize a new group, Citizens' Impeachment Watch, that will try to convince pro-Arroyo lawmakers to defect and set up public billboards to display developments in the impeachment hearings.

Anti-Arroyo forums

A separate group, the Citizens for Truth, Resignation, Impeachment or Ouster, was formed by another Arroyo defector, Sixdon Macasaet. The group has organized anti-Arroyo forums in Manila and the provinces.

Macasaet said the group has thousands of members from all over the country who previously supported the anti-Estrada uprising and helped to install Ms Arroyo in power.

Yang said she had supported Ms Arroyo because of her promise to reform the country's economy and politics, but felt betrayed by the allegations against her.

"It was right to expel Estrada, but unfortunately Ms Arroyo did not deliver on her promise to work for the truth and reforms," Macasaet said.

White Ribbon leaders ready for President Noli

By Norman Bordadora

"IF WE have to deal with Noli de Castro as President, then so be it."

Thus said leaders of the White Ribbon Movement, a coalition of groups of concerned professionals, teachers and students calling for the removal of President Macapagal-Arroyo from office, either through her resignation or impeachment by Congress.

The alliance also urged Filipinos to tie white ribbons in their homes, places of work and vehicles to show the popular clamor for Ms Arroyo's removal from office.

"There is still no consensus among the groups belonging to the White Ribbon Movement, but if we have to deal with Noli de Castro as President, then so be it," said Dr. Carol Araullo, leader of PlunderWatch.

PlunderWatch was one of the first complainants in the impeachment case filed against then President Joseph Estrada in 2000. Evidence presented in the impeachment case is now being used against Estrada in his plunder case before the Sandiganbayan.

Menguita Padilla of Sinag Foundation said the administration was using De Castro as "a bogeyman to scare those who are asking for the President's resignation."

Settle for bogeyman

"If that's the case, then we'd settle for the bogeyman," she said.

Padilla said the choice of De Castro, a popular news reader, as Ms Arroyo's running mate in the last elections showed the political immaturity of the administration. She said it came up with a vice presidential candidate not on the basis of his capabilities but on his lack of capacity to lead.

She said De Castro's perceived lack of leadership skills was being bandied about to temper calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation because he did not have much to offer as an alternative.

Araullo, however, said De Castro must prove himself to be enough of a leader to address the immediate concerns of the people instead of coming up with the same mistakes made by the Arroyo administration.

"For one, he has yet to make an announcement dissociating (himself) from the Arroyo administration," Araullo said.

The White Ribbon Movement is slated to hold a Mass "for truth and justice" at the House of Representatives at noon today.

Tomorrow, members of the group will again be at the House at 9 a.m. to lobby for more signatures among congressmen for the immediate transmittal of the impeachment complaint to the Senate.

Ribbon-tying activities will also be held on Thursday at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University. Hospitals, businesses and communities in the vicinity of these schools are expected to take part.

Palace releases ₱5-B in road funds to solons

From page A1

The road project, funded by the road users' tax, will be for the 210 members of the House of Representatives from congressional districts and will not go to party-list representatives, said the Road Board, an attached agency of the Department of Public Works and Highways that administers the tax.

The P5.1 billion is the biggest annual allocation of the Road Board since its creation in 2001.

Critics claim that the pork barrel is meant to sway lawmakers from signing the impeachment complaint against the President, but Road Board Executive Director Rodolfo Puno dismissed this allegation as mere political intrigue.

The impeachment case against the President has so far gained the support of 41 members of the House, woefully short of the 79 signatures needed to send it to the Senate for trial.

The preventive maintenance projects would mean additional funds of P26.7 million for each of the members of the House representing a district, an amount that practically restored the P70 million in the Priority Development Assistance Fund of each legislator. But some regions will get more of the fund than others.

The PDAF was cut to P40 million this year as part of the cost-cutting measures of the government.

Puno, a brother of Antipolo Rep. Ronaldo V. Puno, chair of Ms Arroyo's political party Kampi, said the maintenance projects were badly needed and were all above-board.

But a government official, who asked not to be identified, claimed that spending P5.1 billion to fix roads was suspect considering that only P2.5 billion of that amount was planned for this year.

"What we cannot condone is the approval of another P2.6 billion essentially for the same goal of preventive maintenance so soon after the first P2.5 billion was approved," the source said.

Puno confirmed that the Road Board approved in mid-July a supplemental budget allocating P2.6 billion for maintenance of the country's roads this year. This was on top of the P2.5 billion that the Road Board had approved in April this year.

"We have a backlog of P50 billion worth of road works in the last 20 years and we are addressing this backlog. In the submission of all districts early this year, they had a very large demand for projects that need immediate maintenance," he said.

First time

Puno said this was the first year that the Road Board would use its funds for preventive maintenance.

"In the past three years, we only engaged in routine and regular maintenance such as potholes and shoulder repair. Preventive maintenance is meant to prolong the life of the road system and improving its standard from poor or fair to good," he said.

The funds will by no means be distributed evenly among regions considering that the Road Board agreed to adopt regional ceilings in which each region will get an automatic lump sum that can be used for unspecified items. Seventy percent of the funds should also be used for national primary roads and 30 percent for national secondary roads.

The source said questions on how these funds would be distributed had led to speculation that the funds were being used to influence the impeachment process similar to how the road users' tax was used in last year's elections.

The government spent at least P2.5 billion for the "Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin" project in the campaign season last year in which street sweepers were virtually used as walking billboards for Ms Arroyo's reelection bid.

"We expect those who will vote for impeachment to get less allocation," said the source who noted that this should explain why Malacañang had bragged about 180 members of the House signing an anti-impeachment paper.

Ms Arroyo's bailiwicks

Based on the distribution of the initial P2.5 billion for preventive maintenance this year, the top five regions that got the lion's share of the funds were Metro Manila (P278.458 million), Calabarzon (P272.265 million), Central Luzon (P241.281 million), Central Visayas (P219.837 million) and Western Visayas (P215.344 million).

Except for Metro Manila, all the top four recipients of the first batch of the road users' tax were bailiwicks of the President—Calabarzon, which includes Antipolo City; Central Luzon which includes the President's home province of Pampanga, Central Visayas which includes Cebu, and Western Visayas which includes Negros Occidental and Iloilo.

Puno, however, maintained that the distribution of funds was based on the vehicle population in each region. Curiously, Ilocos (Region 1) has almost the same number of vehicles at 422,245 units as Western Visayas (Region 6) with 443,481 units, but the Ilocos provinces only got P153.743 million compared to the Aklan-Iloilo-Negros provinces which received P215.344 million.

Puno vehemently rejected insinuations that these projects were an attempt to bribe House members into thumbing down the impeachment case against the President.

"That's impossible. The funds for these projects are released through the regional office of the DPWH and these projects are initiated by district engineers to comply with the state of the roads," he said.

No political bias

He said the allegations were all loose talk. "There is no political bias in the distribution of funds. We don't find out if they are opposition or administration districts."

To further prove his point, Puno said opposition stalwarts such as Minority Leader Rep. Francisco Escudero, Rep. Teofisto Guingona II and Rep. Ruy Elias Lopez got their share of the bounty.

"Almost all on the list supported impeachment. But the distribution depends on the need and no way can [the projects] be implemented without the DPWH. There is competitive bidding for contractors in the area and these are all transparent because they are carried out on the Internet," the head of the Road Board said.

Puno also rebutted allegations that the Road Board was influenced by his brother Ronaldo.

"We're brothers but he does not know what I do and I do not know what he does," he said, citing his long career in the bureaucracy.

Puno, who has a master's degree in public administration, used to be an assistant secretary for trade and industry.

He said both allocations were approved by the Road Board, which is composed of four Cabinet secretaries—public works (as chair), transportation and communication, budget and management, and finance. The board has three private sector representatives nominated by transport and motorist organizations and appointed by the President.

Asked if the President herself had endorsed these allocations, Puno replied: "No, there is no need for that."

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Opposition loses another witness

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mounted in a bid to stamp out the P50 million-a-day gambling racket that has corrupted the police and politicians.

Seated at a news conference beside Riva was Garcia, a confessed jueteng bagman-turned-whistle-blower. Garcia, who had shaved his moustache, whispered to Riva from time to time.

Last week, Garcia tearfully announced at a news conference that the opposition had forced him to implicate the First Family in the illegal numbers racket in the jueteng hearings at the Senate. Garcia had likewise apologized to the President.

Like Garcia, Riva's testimony did not directly link the First Family to jueteng.

Like Garcia, Riva mentioned opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson in his appearance before the Senate. Riva said Lacson's campaign manager, Ben Aguilar, had encouraged him to reveal what he knew about jueteng.

Also, as in Garcia's news conference, Ricardo "Ding" Santos was present in Riva's. Santos has denied allegations he is a jueteng lord.

Not paid to apologize

Riva stressed he had not been paid to apologize to Ms Arroyo.

Espinosa, in a statement, said: "What Riva did is worse than turncoatism. He is like a butterfly that would settle on wherever is convenient to him." He said he would file perjury charges against Riva.

"It is very clear they're not recanting their testimonies on jueteng," said Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate investigation. "For as long as there are no changes in their testimonies, whatever is recorded by the committee would be used as basis in our recommendation."

"We consider it a dead issue since one of the principal witnesses vindicated the President," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, referring to Garcia's testimony and the effort to link the First Family to jueteng payoffs.

But the opposition appeared unfazed. At least three more witnesses are being lined up by Lacson, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Cruz himself.

Following the volte-face of Riva and Garcia, the three said they were now being cautious about their witnesses.

"There's another one who contacted me the other night. I was assured that he has a written statement, [but] I've not seen the written statement. That's why I told his handler to deliver to me his written statement," Pimentel told reporters.

When asked if the man had volunteered to testify, he said: "Yes, that's why I'm surprised. I don't know the angle. We might be talking about money. I'm not going to pay anyone to testify."

But once cleared, Pimentel said he would give the go-signal for the man to testify at the Senate inquiry chaired by Villar and Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid.

Corroborative evidence

Pimentel declined to disclose other details about the potential witness except to say that his testimony would "more or less corroborate many of the points" raised by Michaelangelo Zuce.

Zuce, former presidential liaison officer for political affairs staffer, testified last week that election regional directors were paid off by Lilia Pineda after a meeting with Ms Arroyo in her Quezon City home in January 2004—four months before the election.

Pineda is the wife of alleged jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

Lacson also disclosed that he had a witness who could corroborate Zuce's testimony, but refused to provide other details about him except to say he's an "active member of the armed services."

However, an INQUIRER source identified the witness as Capt. Marlon Mendoza, a member of the Military Intelligence Group 24. Mendoza was with Virgilio Garcillano of "Hello Garci" fame. Garcillano, the former election commissioner caught in a wiretapped conversation with Ms Arroyo, has gone into hiding.

The opposition last week thought they had a potential witness in Datu Ahmad Bayam, former Palace executive who met with Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and Zuce's counsel Liwayway Vinzons-Chato last week to discuss his plans to testify and corroborate Zuce's testimony. Over the weekend, Bayam denied Zuce's testimony and even accused Binay and Chato of offering a reward if he agreed to help them.

"If those who had testified were convinced to turn around, what more those who have yet to testify? So we have to be very careful in handling our witnesses. We can't share information about them with you," said Pimentel.

First Gentleman

Citing his own sources, Pimentel said the First Gentleman had a hand in the turnabout of Garcia, saying "he personally talked to Garcia to back out."

In a news briefing, Bunye also denied Archbishop Cruz's claim that the Palace was bribing and harassing witnesses.

Instead, Bunye turned the tables on Cruz, saying that "false witnesses" had misled the archbishop in his crusade against illegal gambling.

"Our sense of the situation is that (Cruz) was used with or without his knowledge by witnesses whose objective is to ruin and bring down the President," he said.

Citing pressure exerted by Malacañang on his witnesses, Cruz yesterday said he was now more careful in screening other witnesses volunteering to testify in the Senate investigation.

"We are now determining how strong a witness' resolve is in telling the truth about jueteng," said the head of Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng.

The bishop said at least one witness was going through this new, stringent procedure put up by his antigambling organization.

Barring any hitches, he said the witness would most likely be available for the next Senate jueteng investigation this week.

"This witness has vast and complete knowledge about election fraud and how jueteng money helped finance the campaign of President Arroyo," he said.

Another witness has been lined up for screening and is now under the custody of a close friend of the Lingayen-Dagupan prelate.

As a matter of procedure, Cruz requires all potential witnesses to put in writing everything they know about jueteng, including their reasons for wanting to come out. They are also expected to record their testimony on video and preserve it in an affidavit.

Only after these steps are completed would he agree to meet with them for a final one-on-one interview.

Not fool-proof

Garcia, the confessed former jueteng bagman, also went through this same rigorous procedure. And having jumped to Malacañang's side of the fence, he all but showed that the system was anything but fool-proof.

While not exactly a retraction, the claim by Garcia that he had been used by the opposition to attack Ms Arroyo had discouraged two potential witnesses, the bishop admitted.

"One of them said he would just go to the court of public opinion while the other feared the pressures of testifying," he said.

Part of Garcia's complaint was that he was purportedly uprooted from his livelihood since showing up before senators. He also complained of being away from his family while having to endure the nagging fear of harm.

But fellow witness Cam said this was not all there was to Garcia's decision to bolt the bishop's group.

In a previous interview with the INQUIRER, Cam said Garcia had admitted that he had been offered a bagful of cash in exchange for clearing members of the First Family in the jueteng scandal. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet Labog-Javellana, TJ Burgonio and Christian V. Esguerra*

'Witness Prevention Program' hit

From page A1

mga witnesses *namin*," said Cayetano, referring to a brand of corn chips and eliciting chuckles from reporters who were served popcorn at the press conference.

Representatives Joel Villanueva, Teodoro Casiño and Darlene Antonino-Custodio said they had to set aside portions of their meager income as legislators just to shoulder "impeachment expenses."

Cayetano believed that "jueteng money" was being used by Malacañang to cover up the jueteng and poll fraud scandals.

He assured the public that the witnesses who had volunteered to testify in the impeachment trial were "fully confident that the truth would come out."

The impeachment complaint against the President has 41 signatures, short of the 79 needed to send it to the Senate for trial.

Administration Rep. Monico Puentevella said in a text message that the opposition was being "disingenuous here," yet they themselves "started the fire."

"They are the ones who are burning the house, and yet when the arsonists they hired show remorse, they throw stones at them," Puentevella said. "And then when they were exposed, they pretend that they're angry. What a weird state of affairs."

Witness academy

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said it was the opposition that was creating a Philippine Witness Academy (PWA) in which "potential witnesses are trained and coached to peddle lies against the First Family prior to their appearance in the Senate jueteng probe."

He said the House would investigate the alleged production of spurious witnesses because it was tantamount to creating a PWA.

Nograles urged the Senate to conduct a parallel probe of what he said was an opposition plot to destabilize the administration through the "production of bogus witnesses and the selling of their testimony to the public in order to destroy the First Family's image."

Cayetano shot back, saying: "If the witnesses make a turnaround (from their testimonies) to favor the President, they were offered (this and that), but if they say something against the President, they don't even get a centavo. That's double standard."

He said he thought the country had laws to protect witnesses in legislative hearings and criminal conspiracies.

"When the President is being accused of leading the biggest conspiracy of stealing elections, of lying and cheating and covering it up, how come (our) witnesses were not being used (against her)?" he asked.

He expressed the hope that the House committee on justice, which will start hearings on the impeachment complaint on Wednesday, would come up with solutions to protect real witnesses.

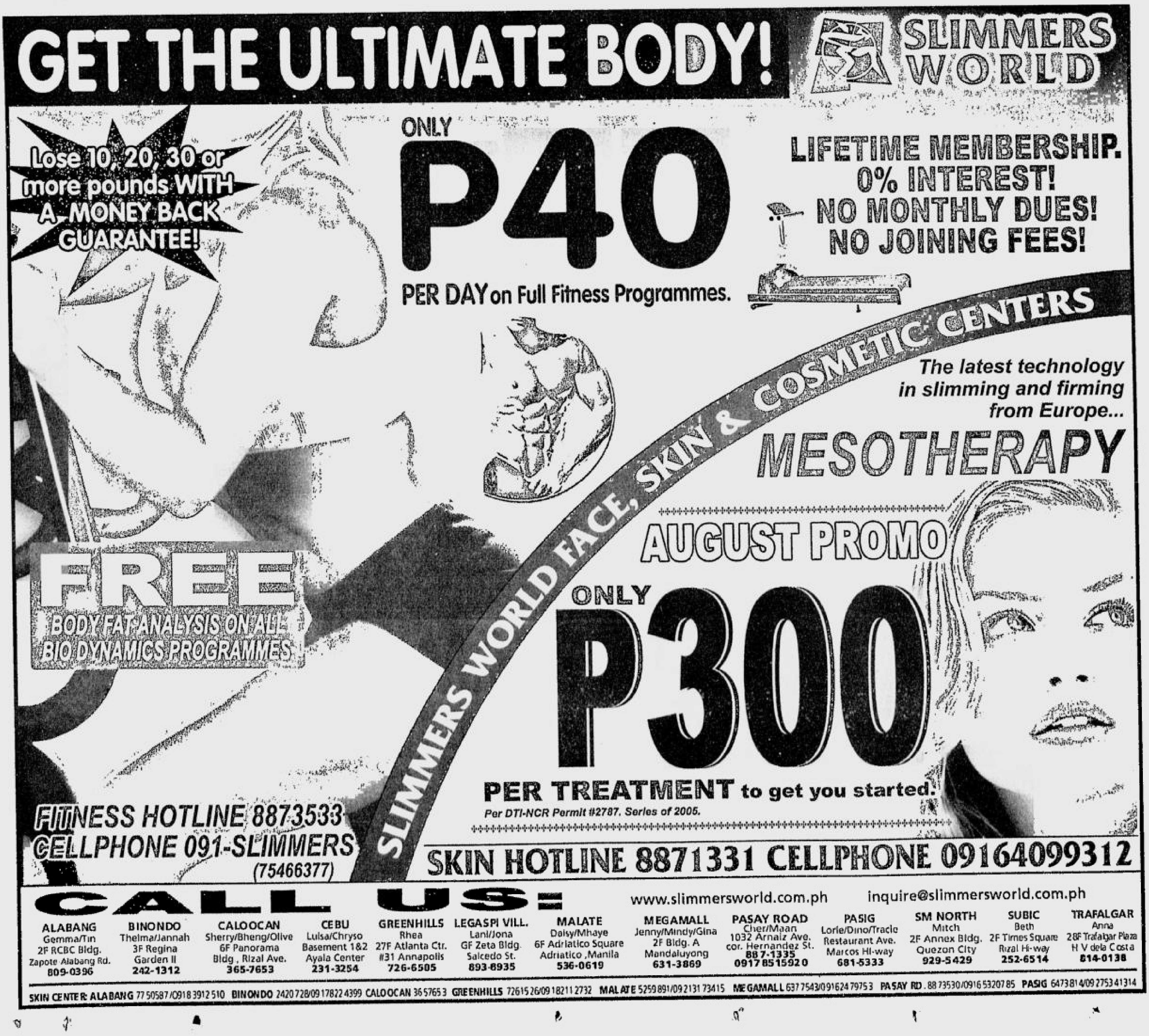
He noted that impeachment managers in the United States were funded by the US Congress, which provides "independent" prosecutors with automatic appropriations.

Although supposedly in dire financial straits, the opposition "will do everything to protect the integrity" of the 11 witnesses, including Michaelangelo Zuce, Cayetano said.

It was Zuce who claimed that he witnessed the giving of jueteng money to election officials at the home of Ms Arroyo in Quezon City four months before the May 2004 presidential election.

"For the first time, we see the marriage of jueteng and election fraud through Zuce," Rep. Rolex Suplico said.

Casiño said that when "witnesses come to us, they ask only two things—security and immunity. Money is not being talked about because they only want to set the record straight, and to clear their names."



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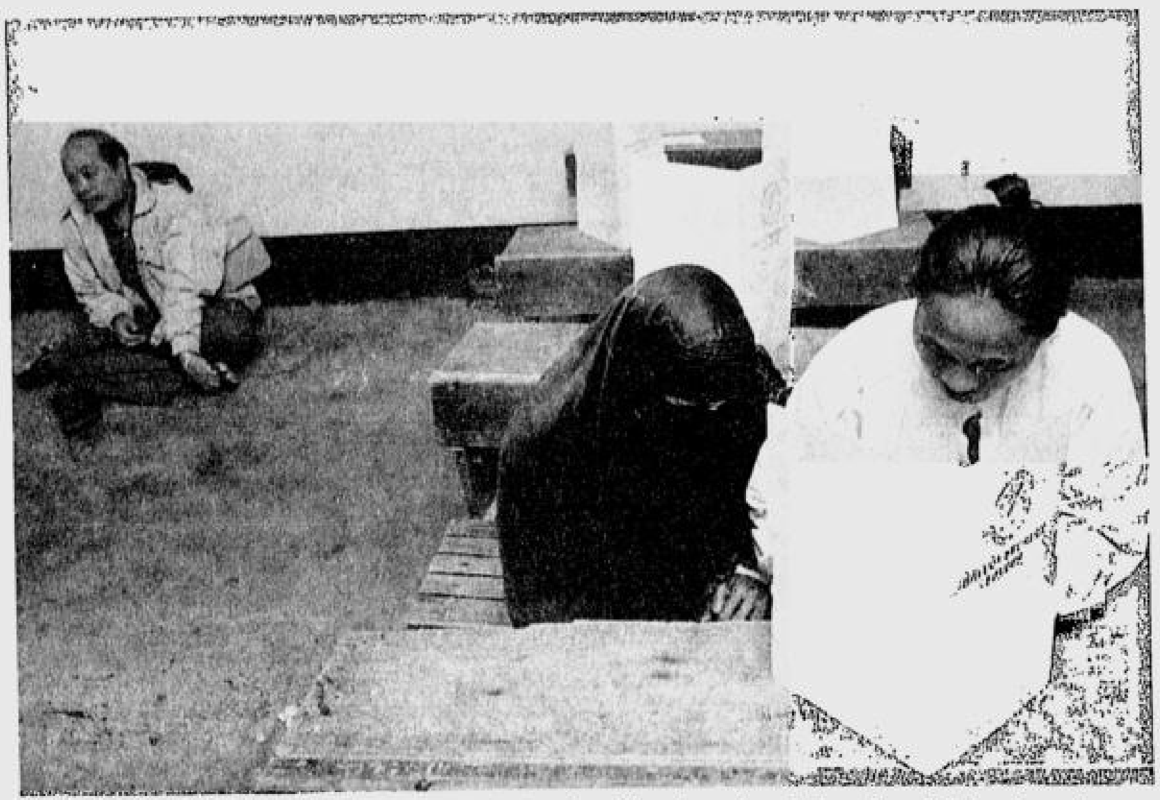
SUPPORTERS of a local politician barricade a school in South Upi town in Maguindanao to prevent people from voting in yesterday's ARMM elections. REUTERS



ROCAYA Ali (right) assists her mother Aisa Sultan in writing down her choice of candidates since she can neither read nor write. A watcher sits in a corner of the room. LYN RILLON

ARMM polls 'abnormally' peaceful

From page A1

our own families."

Elections in the five-province, one-city region have been traditionally marred by violence, ballot-snatching and vote-buying.

In Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, the town's mayor was arrested for indiscriminate firing and preventing poll officials from performing their duties.

"Isolated" cases of snatching of ballot boxes were also reported elsewhere.

Waiting for vote-buyers

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, in charge of voting in Lanao del Sur, said there was a 50-percent turnout of voters all over the ARMM, a 10-percent increase compared to the elections in 2001.

In Sulu, turnout was low. Some residents said the elections were an exercise in futility as they had already given up hope on the ARMM.

But the situation could also indicate less vote-buying. Some residents in the capital town of Jolo stood outside polling places, waiting for people to buy their votes.

Political entertainment

More than a million residents were eligible to vote in the elections held every three years for a new governor, vice governor and 24 seats in the regional assembly.

The impoverished ARMM includes the provinces of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur and the city of Marawi.

"I hope no other violent incident happens," Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said, knocking on a wooden table at the ARMM monitoring center in Davao City.

Dureza said the "political entertainment" in Metro Manila had stolen the people's attention away from the polls, resulting in the relatively peaceful elections.

Administration gubernatorial candidate Datu Zaldy Ampatuan cast his vote at 8:15 a.m. in Barangay Poblacion in Shariff Aguak town in Maguindanao. Ampatuan expects to win via a landslide.

Solace for Hussin

Another gubernatorial candidate, Ibrahim Paglas III, also said he had a "big chance" of winning.

Outgoing ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin, who withdrew his reelection bid and boycotted the polls after President Macapagal-Arroyo failed to anoint a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) candidate, said he still supported the present administration.

Hussin said Ms Macapagal's failure to endorse an MNLF gubernatorial candidate was tantamount to violating the 1996 peace agreement that the government signed with the MNLF.

He said his boycott stance did not affect his personal ties with the President, who has offered to name him as the country's envoy to Saudi Arabia or ambassador-at-large to the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Protest in South Upi

Voting in South Upi, Maguindanao, was delayed when a number of residents trooped to the municipal hall to prevent the distribution of election paraphernalia.

The protesters opposed the holding of elections pending the proclamation of the winners of last year's polls which were marred by allegations that at least 90 ballots were tampered with.

Commissioner Tuazon said although the protesters agreed to disperse around 1:15 p.m., the delay had prompted some voters to just go home.

"It took me six military and police generals to convince the protesters to vacate the school and allow the delivery of the election materials to the board of election inspectors," he said.

While the elections were generally peaceful in Lanao del Sur province, they were far from being orderly and clean.

P500 for a vote

In Marawi City and many towns in Lanao del Sur, supporters of candidates were seen inside the polling places even after they had voted.

In the towns of Balindong, Bacolod-Kalawi, Madalum, Ganassi, Pualas and Calanogas, candidates' supporters even distributed election flyers inside the precincts.

As one voter filled his ballot, candidates' supporters were seen peering over his back.

In Madalum, vote-buying occurred inside a precinct—one "operator" for a candidate handed a P500 bill to a voter who had just cast his ballot.

Caught by reporters, the "operator" simply said the fat bill was "for fare."

In Calanogas, election monitors from civil society groups said they saw the wife of a politician "directing voters" and offering them something inside the polling place.

One monitor, who refused to be identified, said it was likely money was offered but he could not determine how much.

A ballot box in a precinct in Bacolod-Kalawi was plastered with a propaganda sticker of a candidate for the legislative assembly.

What's indelible ink?

A volunteer for the Interfaith Movement for Electoral Reforms and Good Governance (IMERGG) expressed fear there could have been double-voting because indelible ink was not used.

This was also the case in the towns of Bacolod-Kalawi, Madalum, Ganassi, Pualas and Calanogas.

One IMERGG volunteer said that when voters were about to leave precincts, poll officials did not insist on marking their finger with indelible ink.

Asked about this, one election inspector in Bacolod-Kalawi said he did not even know what indelible ink was.

Reporters knew there was a supply of the ink around but it had been set aside.

Allan Macapundag, election officer of Madalum, told reporters that in his town, it was the voters themselves who argued with precinct officials against putting indelible ink on their fingers.

Mayor ordered arrested

Ray Sumalipao, assistant regional director of Comelec-ARMM, said if there was an abnormally high turnout in some towns, it could be inferred that there was double-voting.

But Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said he would punish election officers responsible if they allowed such a practice.

A Comelec update at 2 p.m. mentioned only minor hitches in voting in Lanao del Sur.

Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, Task Force Hope commander, said power generators had been placed "on standby" in Sulu in case of a power outage.

Dolorfino said a ballot box was snatched in Barangay Tumahubong, Sumisip, Basilan, shortly before noon. Minutes later, another ballot box was snatched in Barangay Marang, but it was immediately recovered.

In Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, Abalos ordered the arrest of Mayor Muslimin Makabato for allegedly preventing the distribution of election paraphernalia and delaying the voting.

Abalos said Makabato claimed he was only after the safety of the teachers serving in the election.

Teachers intimidated

The teachers claimed the mayor was "intimidating" them.

"I will charge you with an election offense. You have no right to stop the polls here," Abalos told the mayor.

"*Salbahe* (rogue)," was how Abalos described Makabato.

Makabato refused to talk to reporters, saying he first had to see his lawyer.

When his legal counsel, Arthur Acmad, arrived, there was more trouble. It turned out that Acmad was not a lawyer.

Abalos said misrepresentation charges would be filed against Acmad. *Ryan D. Rosauro, Jeoffrey Maitem, Edwin O. Fernandez, Ed General, Charlie C. Señase, Anthony S. Allada, Germelina A. Lacorte and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Inq7.net will regularly release tallies of ARMM election results at http://armm2005.inq7.net/

MNLF leaders ignore boycott call

By Nash B. Maulana
and Ryan Rosauro
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—A campaign by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to boycott yesterday's regional elections was apparently ignored even by some of its leaders.

For one, Hatimil Hassan, the leader of the MNLF Council of 15, was running for reelection as assemblyman of the lone district of Basilan, said Hamid Piang, chief of the MNLF peace monitoring team in Mindanao and Sulu.

Piang also said that former Sulu Gov. Yusuf Jikiri, the MNLF chief of staff, was supporting the gubernatorial candidacy of ARMM Vice Gov. Mahid Mutilan of the local Ompia Party.

Also supporting Mutilan, Piang noted, was Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin, a former MNLF commander.

Salapuddin's 'lies'

Bensali Sahipa, chief of the MNLF inspectorate-general, said that even jailed MNLF leader Nur Misuari had asked members of the organization not to boycott the elections.

For his part, Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar defended Lakas Christian-Muslim Democrats gubernatorial candidate Zaldy Ampatuan who, he said, was slandered by Salapuddin's "lies" in an INQUIRER report yesterday.

Ampatuan said Salapuddin was "sour-graping," and even "pulling his own chair to gain media mileage as the 'most qualified candidate' at the expense of other people."

Salapuddin claimed President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision not to choose anyone from the MNLF as the administration candidate for the ARMM top posts would have serious implications to the peace agreement that the MNLF signed in 1996.

Ampatuan disagreed.

"One thing they should know is that the ARMM was not created for any particular group but for the whole Bangsamoro," Ampatuan said.

Ampatuan said that Salapuddin landed No. 4 in the candidate selection process "probably because of his own blunders and not of the government."

Expert says federalism better for Bangsamoro

From page A1

sources ... They would need [start-up] funds for health, education [and other basic services]," Abueva said.

"These are called grants-in-aid in the US, equalization fund in Australia and solidarity fund in Germany," he said.

The funds, he said, would be to help poor states to somehow catch up with the more well-off federal states.

In the wake of yesterday's regional elections, some Muslim groups called on the government to change its "war policy" if it wants to develop the impoverished region.

Lawyer Nasser Marohomsalic, convenor of the Union of Muslims for Morality and Truth, said the ARMM provinces were in dire economic straits, with seven of 10 people living in poverty.

The group said the region had the highest infant, maternal mortality and sickness rates in the country.

Only three of 10 children who enter elementary school complete their studies, only half of the barangays have electricity, and less than two-thirds of the neighborhoods have drinking water, the group said.

Other problems are lack of housing, food scarcity, lack of sources of livelihood, poor sanitation conditions, lack of farm inputs, and lack of access to health care.

"War and displacement have greatly disrupted the lives of the people," Marohomsalic said.

Cosain Naga Jr. of the Suara Bangsamoro Party said past administrations had also failed to implement genuine reform and bring peace to the region despite the establishment of the autonomous unit.

Naga said it was up to incoming regional officials to convince Muslims to stand up to the administration's "warmongering" policies and press for the uplift of the lives of the Bangsamoro people.

"The Muslim leaders in the ARMM, though sincere in their intentions, have been ... gagged and weakened to fight the system," Naga said. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

Ramos suggests 16-hour workday for lawmakers

From page A1

Whew! This was the tough order of former President Fidel V. Ramos to members of the House of Representatives to enable them to tackle the issue of Charter change, the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo and their main task of making laws for the nation—all at the same time.

The man who has squelched speculation that he has become the power behind the Arroyo administration was a guest speaker yesterday on the occasion of the 104th anniversary of the now defunct Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police. The PC-INP, which Ramos headed during the Marcos regime, was reorganized and renamed the Philippine National Police during the Aquino administration.

Ramos used the occasion to make a pitch for Charter change, which the opposition claims is merely a Malacañang tactic to divert public attention from charges that Ms Arroyo had rigged the 2004 presidential election.

"Impeachment, constitutional change and lawmaking should be and can be done simultaneously," he told reporters in Camp Crame.

First, he said, lawmakers should hold regular sessions in the morning. At present, the House holds committee hearings in the morning and plenary sessions in the afternoon.

Second, Ramos said, lawmakers should refrain from taking too many vacation breaks. House members are notorious for their frequent junkets abroad. Absenteeism is also rife.

"They should stop dinner meetings. They should just be served with '*pandesal*' and coffee. Food is expensive now. Let us cut out the frills and the extravagances," he added.

Looking straight at the television camera, Ramos pointed his index finger toward the lens and seemed to address the House, which is dominated by pro-Arroyo lawmakers: "Work 16 hours a day, men!"

Parliamentary setup

In his speech before 300 policemen and PNP personnel, Ramos also harped on his proposed constitutional reforms, particularly the shift from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government.

Under the parliamentary system, Ramos said it would be easier to remove a nonperforming government without a bloody struggle.

He said young leaders would also have a better chance to rise to the top because the system "puts more importance in leadership training, exposure and potential than just popularity—which is probably the main determinant of winners in the elections [at present]."

He said the parliamentary system would provide for a "democratic, uniform, equitable and proportional representation, whether it is bicameral or unicameral, whether it is federal or unitary."

Because the prime minister would be elected by district representatives, there would be no need for a candidate seeking the top government post to "shake the hands of 40 million voters" nor would there be any need for politicians to "sing and dance" on the campaign trail, Ramos said.

Counterproposal

At another forum, however, Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias made a counterproposal that would be less painful for House members.

Ms Arroyo, according to Tobias, should first answer and settle the charges that she had committed election fraud and used "jueteng" money to ensure her victory in the 2004 presidential election before she tinkers with the Constitution. The President has denied the charges.

"Let us first settle the issues," the bishop told reporters. "The President is saddled with accusations that have to be addressed and answered properly in the minds of the people."

Only then should the Arroyo administration initiate debates on constitutional changes, including a shift to a parliamentary form and federal type of government, Tobias said.

Once the issues confronting the President had been settled, the bishop said the public should focus on "systems change"—not just a shift in the system of government.

"There should be a systems change that should happen from the President down to the smallest barangay unit," he said. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

'Jueteng' out by Sept. 15 if Palace follows suggestions – Hagedorn

By Leila Salaverria

THE PRESIDENT'S "anti-jueteng" adviser yesterday said the illegal numbers game could be gone by Sept. 15 if his suggestions for stopping it would be followed.

Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn yesterday said he would submit to the President his recommendations for stopping jueteng operations on Aug. 31.

"Hopefully, if our plans would be followed and implemented, by Sept. 15, jueteng would be finished," he told reporters at the Kapihan sa Manila forum.

Hagedorn, the chair of the League of City Mayors, said one of his recommendations is to talk directly to the local government officials in areas where the illegal numbers game is rampant.

He called the tactic "friendly persuasion." He said it involves explaining to the mayors that jueteng may appear to be helping the poor because it provides jobs, but it also takes money away from poor people as well and actually deprives more people of money than it helps.

Hagedorn earlier revealed that jueteng stopped in Puerto Princesa because he was the one operating the illegal game and he decided to stop it. His revelation surprised many because very few officials would admit involvement in the illegal numbers racket.

Should "friendly persuasion" fail, he said then the full force of the law would be used against those involved in jueteng.

But he said this would have to be enforced by the law enforcement agencies.

The third recommendation is to use the "holistic approach," which Hagedorn acknowledged may not be easy to do.

Hagedorn said this involves providing livelihood projects to all those who are involved in jueteng operations and giving incentives to those who benefit from protecting or letting jueteng operations thrive, like policemen, so that they would not be tempted to earn extra income.

NEWSBRIEFS

Escudero upbeat on Dy

FORMER Isabela Gov. Faustino "Jun" Dy Jr. is coming home this week to testify on the alleged meeting between President Macapagal-Arroyo and election officials in January 2004, opposition lawmakers said yesterday. House Minority Leader Francis Escudero described his meeting with Dy in an undisclosed location in the US as successful. Escudero, however, did not say if he would return to Manila with Dy on Thursday. He made the announcement through South Cotabato Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio who, along with Reps. Alan Peter Cayetano, Rolex Suplico, Joel Villanueva and Teddy Casiño, presided over the regular Monday press briefing by the minority. "Chiz (Escudero) has sent word that he had spoken to Governor Dy several times already and that he will have several meetings prior to his coming back on Thursday. As a matter of fact, I believe they are together right now," said Custodio.

Michael Lim Ubac

More mangrove forests

THE Philippines still has 250,000 hectares of mangrove forests left, contrary to reports by international aid and environment groups, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said. Moving to set the record straight, the DENR officially set the remaining mangrove forest cover at 250,000 hectares. The DENR has been quoted in various studies as saying the country had only 120,000 hectares of mangroves left from 160,000 hectares 20 years ago and 450,000 hectares in 1918. Environment Undersecretary Armando de Castro said the DENR had reconciled statistics from various bureaus and programs involved in coastal resource management and came up with the figure. "Our problem is that there are so many bureaus involved in similar projects and they have different data. We're working on reconciling our figures at the DENR," De Castro said following a recent workshop of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau.

Blanche S. Rivera

US court 'irrelevant'

A LAWYER of former President Joseph Estrada yesterday said the opinion of a foreign court has "no bearing" and is "irrelevant" to the criminal charges faced by the ousted president. Jose Flaminiano, a member of Estrada's defense team, reacting to the "adverse" finding of the Nevada Circuit Court on Charlie "Atong" Ang, Estrada's erstwhile gambling crony; said the Sandiganbayan Special Division is not bound by whatever findings of an American or other foreign courts. "If there is really an adverse finding against Ang, how come he has not yet been extradited from the United States? In any case it does not matter to us since he is not our witness," Flaminiano said. Earlier, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the Nevada Circuit Court hearing the extradition case filed against Ang by the Philippine government has found probable cause that Ang had indeed committed plunder. Villa-Ignacio said the favorable court ruling clearly showed that Estrada and his son Sen. Jinggoy Estrada are guilty of plunder.

Nelson F. Flores

1.3M textbooks ready

AN additional 1.3 million textbooks and teachers' manuals will be distributed to public schools nationwide this month, the Department of Education said yesterday. The distribution of the books is in line with the DepEd's national textbooks delivery program dubbed as the "Textbook Count-3" which aims to ensure quality production and timely delivery of the exact prescribed textbooks and lesson guides for schools. According to DepEd Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz, a total of 12,794 schools nationwide will benefit from the additional textbooks and teachers manual which would be distributed until by the end of October. "The books will be delivered to more than 8,400 public elementary schools and 4,394 public high schools nationwide from August to October this year," Luz said. The delivery of the books, Luz added, will commence on Aug. 15 and will end on October.

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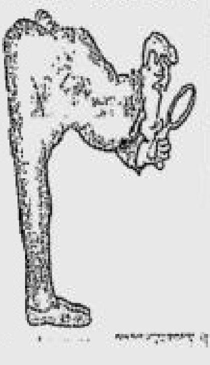

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Japan PM to call election after defeat of postal bills

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will call an election for Sept. 11, his coalition partner said on Monday after parliament's upper house rejected bills to privatize the postal system—the core of Koizumi's reforms.

Koizumi's decades-old obsession with postal privatization had become the core of his agenda of weaning his Liberal Democratic Party from its addiction to the wasteful public spending that won votes but spawned scandals and inflated government debt.

Now, he is betting that he can purge antireformers from the LDP, which has ruled Japan for most of the past half century, and move ahead with his agenda.

"I will smash the old LDP and forge ahead with a new LDP," public broadcaster NHK quoted Koizumi as saying in remarks that echoed his campaign slogan from four years ago.

KOIZUMI

But politicians and analysts say the bitterly divided LDP is in danger of losing to the main opposition Democratic Party in an election for parliament's powerful lower house.

Takenori Kanzaki, leader of junior ruling coalition party, the New Komeito, told reporters after a meeting with Koizumi that the election would be held next month, infuriating party rebels who had insisted that Koizumi should resign instead.

"There is no justification. It's like suicide bombing," said LDP lower house lawmaker Housei Norota, who had opposed the bills to privatize Japan Post, a sprawling giant that includes the world's biggest deposit-taking institution and has some $3 trillion in assets.

Economics Minister Heizo Takenaka, who is in charge of postal reform, told reporters the defeat of the bills was a great loss.

"Postal system privatization represented an important crossroads in terms of whether Japan opts for a small government or a big government. In that sense, I feel the rejection was a big loss for Japan's future and economy," he said.

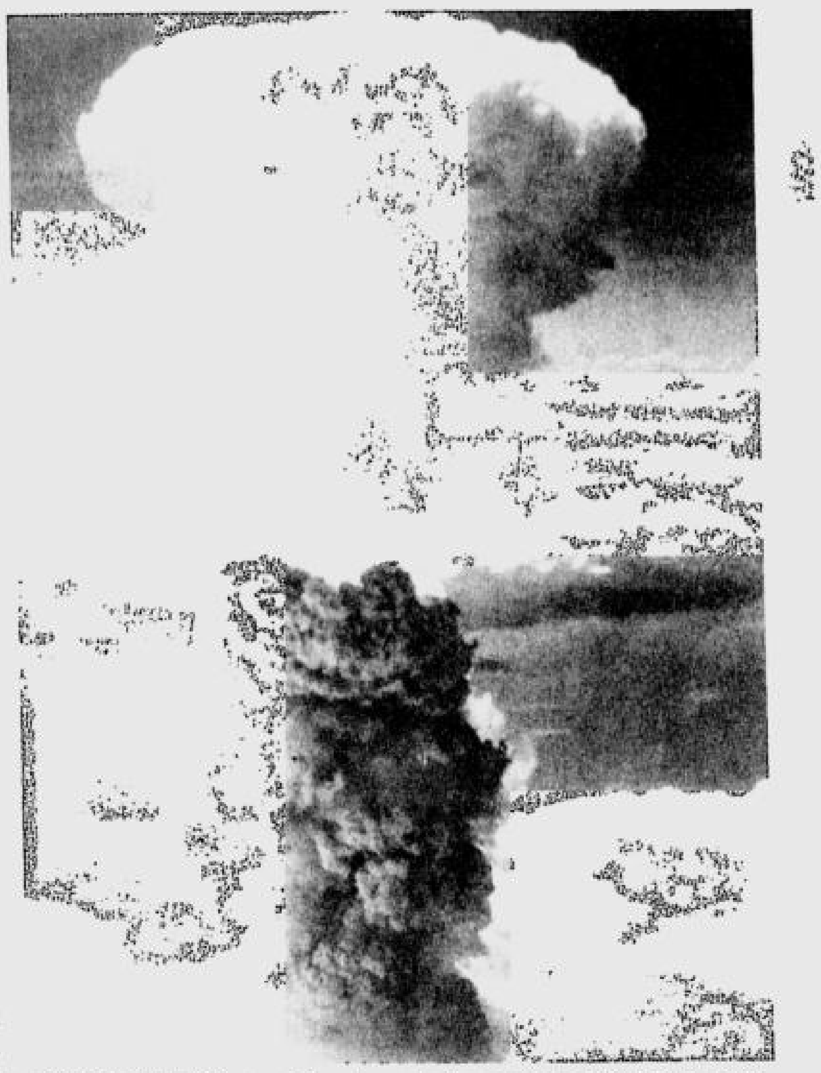
Some financial market analysts said that the defeat meant that the reforms Koizumi pledged to implement when he swept into power in 2001 would be stalled.

"It's a very sad day for the reform story of Japan, because with this vote, it's essentially over and the effects of this will be felt in the years to come," said Kirby Daley, a strategist at Societe Generale Securities' Fimat division.

Others were less pessimistic.

"Koizumi tried to achieve reform within the LDP framework. He said that was possible. But he couldn't do that, so that means reform is only possible if there is a change in government," said Yasunori Sone, a political science professor at Keio University.

The outcome of the vote ensures that the uncertainty that has hit Japan's markets in recent days will continue at least until a new government comes into office. *Reuters*



THE SECOND US atomic bomb exploding on Nagasaki, Aug. 9, 1945. Around 140,000 people, or more than half of Hiroshima's population at the time, died in the first atomic bombing Aug. 6, 1945, with another 70,000 people perishing in Nagasaki. AFP

Japan Post: An entrenched and cash-rich political player

TOKYO—The Japan Post, which Monday escaped privatization and triggered a new election, does far more than just deliver letters. It is the world's largest financial institution and has been entrenched in national life for more than a century.

People turn to its 25,000 branches nationwide not only for the expected mail and parcel deliveries, but also for savings and life insurance.

Its financial assets total more than $3 trillion, far more than any bank in the world.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi believes breaking up the post office would stimulate the private sector and hence economic growth. A new privatized bank would cut off the flow of capital to inefficient public projects, he argues.

But his privatization campaign puts him in head-to-head confrontation with some of the strongest supporters of his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The post office was turned into a quasi-bank in 1875, seven years into the Meiji era of Japan's rapid modernization, to let small savers store their money in a public institution and not have to pay any tax on the interest.

As a result, the Japan Post has formed a close nexus with the powerful. Most branches are run by prominent community members who are a core constituency of the LDP.

The Japan Post's 270,000 workers are reputed to be able to mobilize one million votes on behalf of the LDP, which has ruled Japan almost uninterrupted since the end of World War II.

The connection is closest in rural communities.

Japan Post supporters fear privatization would lead the post office to focus on more profitable regions, a concern dismissed by the Koizumi government which has set up a special fund to ensure service in remote areas.

At Shimanto-gawa post office in the mountainous small town of Yusuhara on the western island of Shikoku, post office workers go to each home to collect mail since many customers are elderly and cannot carry heavy parcels, Jiji Press said.

An 86-year-old woman in the town was quoted as saying, "Without this post office, I would have to go by taxi, which costs me about 10,000 yen for a round trip. But I'm not paid that much in the pension system." *AFP*

Nagasaki stands firm 2nd nuke bombing was wrong

By Shingo Ito

NAGASAKI, Japan—After marking the start of the atomic age in Hiroshima 60 years ago, the world will mark today the second nuclear bombing in Nagasaki, an anniversary which always begs the question whether a second attack was justified.

For residents of Nagasaki, the nuclear bombing on Aug. 9, 1945 just three days after Hiroshima is taken as proof that US war planners had more on their minds than pure military strategy.

"That was just a living-body test, wasn't it?" said Nagasaki Mayor Iccho Ito.

The mayor argued that the United States, which dropped a uranium-type nuclear bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, wanted to collect data through a different type of explosive—a plutonium bomb.

"The United States tries to justify its bombing on Hiroshima, saying it was aimed at closing the war as soon as possible," Ito said.

"But then why just three days later did they have to use a plutonium bomb, not a uranium bomb?" he asked.

The plutonium bomb, which is much more powerful than a uranium one and still a standard for atomic weapons, killed some 70,000 people in Nagasaki, most of whom were melted or burnt to death instantly.

The bomb, codenamed "Fat Man" after the "Little Boy" that obliterated Hiroshima, flattened 80 percent of the buildings after it fell on the city on the southern island of Kyushu on a hot summer day at 11:02 a.m.

But the target was not meant to be Nagasaki, which was a major shipyard but not a garrison city like Hiroshima, where more than 140,000 people died.

The bombardier on Aug. 9 was due to drop "Fat Man" on Kokura, a city north of here with a large arms factory, but switched to Nagasaki at the last minute due to bad weather.

"It was not military strategy but a mere experiment," said Teruo Ideguchi, who suffered serious head injuries in the bombing and recently published a study on the second attack.

"Some people say it was natural for the United States to drop the bomb, but I want to ask them, was it natural for us to be bombed?" he asked. "There can be no excuse for the second bombing."

At the time, US military estimates said at least a quarter of a million Allied troops could die in an invasion of mainland Japan—a major consideration for a nation fatigued from a two-front war.

The sole land battle in Japan, in Okinawa, lasted for 83 days and claimed some 200,000 lives, including Japanese civilians pressured to commit suicide rather than surrender.

"We have used it in order to shorten the agony of war, in order to save the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans," President Harry Truman told Americans of the nuclear attacks in a radio address on Aug. 9, 1945.

Historians say the bitter debate on the nuclear bombings is unlikely to reach a consensus soon.

"One school of thought says the bombs were needed to end the war while the other says a near-defeated Japan couldn't have deserved them," said Osamu Ishii, a professor of international politics at Teikyo University in Tokyo.

But most Nagasaki residents have no doubt the bombing was unnecessary. *AFP*

French packets helping Niger's starving children

By Michael Wines

MARADI, Niger—In the crowd of riotously dressed mothers clasping wailing, naked infants at a Doctors Without Borders feeding center just west of here, Taorey Asama, at 27 months old, stands out for a heart-rending reason: She looks like a normal baby.

Many of the others have the skeletal frames and baggy skin of children with severe malnutrition. The good news is that a month ago, so did Taorey.

"When she came here, she was all small and curled up," said her mother Henda, 30. "It's Plumpy'nut that's made her like this. She's immense!"

Never heard of Plumpy'nut? Come to Maradi, a bustling crossroads where the number of malnourished children exceeds even the flocks of motor scooters flitting down its dirt streets. At this epicenter of Niger's latest hunger crisis, Plumpy'nut is saving lives, perhaps including Taorey's.

Plumpy'nut, which comes in a silvery foil package the size of two grasping baby-size hands, is 500 calories of fortified peanut butter, a beige paste about as thick as mashed potatoes and stuffed with milk, vitamins and minerals.

Since the packets came into the hands of relief organizations during the Darfur crisis in Sudan, they have been revolutionizing emergency care for severely malnourished children who are old enough to take solid food by taking care out of crowded field hospitals and straight into mothers' homes.

The prescription given mothers here is simple: Give one baby two packets of Plumpy'nut each day. Watch him wolf them down. Wait for him to grow. Which he will, almost immediately: Badly malnourished babies can gain from one to two pounds a week eating Plumpy'nut.

"This product, it's beyond opinion—it's documented, it's scientific fact. We've seen it working," said Milton Tectonidis, a Paris-based nutrition specialist for Doctors Without Borders, speaking in an interview here.

Plumpy'nut—the name melds the words "plump" and "peanut"—costs less than the milk formula, has a two-year shelf life. Its sealed packaging and thick consistency make it a poor home for disease-causing germs that thrive in milk.

The product is the brainchild of a French scientist, Andre Briend, who had labored in vain for years to concoct a ready-to-eat nutrition supplement until serendipity—a bottle of the popular Nutella breakfast spread on his kitchen table—led him to try a paste instead of candy bars and other forms of food. Later a French company that specializes in making food supplements for relief work, Nutriset SAS, began packaging the formula under the name Plumpy'nut. *New York Times*

100,000 South African gold miners strike

JOHANNESBURG—About 100,000 South African gold miners stayed off work on Monday in the country's first industry-wide strike in 18 years to demand higher wages in the world's biggest bullion producer, their union said.

"The strike is 100 percent countrywide, all our people, about 100,000 of them are on strike," Gwede Mantashe, general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), said.

The strike started across the country on Sunday at 6 p.m. local time.

South Africa's gold industry accounts for around 15 percent of total global output, and the mining sector contributes about 8 percent to the nation's gross domestic product.

A strike would lead to the loss of around 28,000 ounces of gold production and 79 million rand ($12.21 million) in lost revenue per day, a Deutsche Securities analyst has estimated.

The strike would paralyze the South African mines of the world's no. 2 gold producer AngloGold Ashanti, fourth-ranked Gold Fields, sixth-placed Harmony Gold and South Deep, a joint venture of South Africa's Western Areas and Canada's Placer Dome.

Despite improved offers from two companies, last-minute talks failed to yield a deal on Sunday.

In 11th-hour talks, AngloGold and South Deep offered wage hikes of between 5.25 and 6.5 percent, the NUM said. *Reuters*

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Oil-for-food inquiry to accuse UN director

By Evelyn Leopold

UNITED NATIONS—An investigation into the oil-for-food program will accuse for the first time on Monday the director of the defunct $67-billion UN operation of getting cash from oil deals.

A UN-established Independent 'Inquiry Committee, led by former US Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker, plans to release on Monday its third interim report on allegations of corruption in the humanitarian program for Iraq, which began in 1996 and ended in 2003.

Benon Sevan, the executive director of the program, is to be accused of getting a kickback for steering Iraqi oil contracts to an Egyptian trader and of refusing to cooperate with the Volcker panel, his attorney Eric Lewis said.

Lewis called the charges "flatly false." He released Sevan's side of the story in lengthy documents on Thursday after receiving a letter from the panel outlining "adverse findings" that the report would contain.

On Sunday, Lewis distributed a letter from Sevan, 67, to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan resigning from his current job, which he was given after he retired. The $1-a-year post carries immunity and was meant to ensure he would cooperate with the probe.

He blamed the secretary general and his staff for not defending the program and making him a scapegoat.

"I fully understand the pressure that you are under, and that there are those who are trying to destroy your reputation as well as my own, but sacrificing me for political expediency will never appease our critics or help you or the Organization," Sevan wrote.

The Volcker committee, in a Feb. 3 interim report, expressed suspicion about four payments, amounting to $160,000, that Sevan had declared to the United Nations as funds from his now-deceased aunt.

But Sevan noted on Sunday it was not credible that he would have compromised his career for $160,000 after handling billions of dollars in the program.

Sevan, a Cypriot with a distinguished 40-year career in the United Nations, is alleged to have taken bribes "in concert with" the brother-in-law of former Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Lewis said.

"The IIC claims that Mr. Sevan received money from African Middle East Petroleum in concert with Fred Nadler, a friend, and a relative by marriage of Mr. (Fakhry) Abdelnour, the principal of AMEP," Lewis said.

Nadler is the brother of Leia Boutros-Ghali, wife of the former secretary general. Abdelnour, the owner of AMEP, is a cousin of Boutros-Ghali, UN chief from 1992 to 1996.

Boutros-Ghali himself has been questioned by the panel but is not linked to the bribe allegations.

AMEP earned some $1.5 million from oil allocations that the panel says Sevan steered to the Egyptian trading firm.

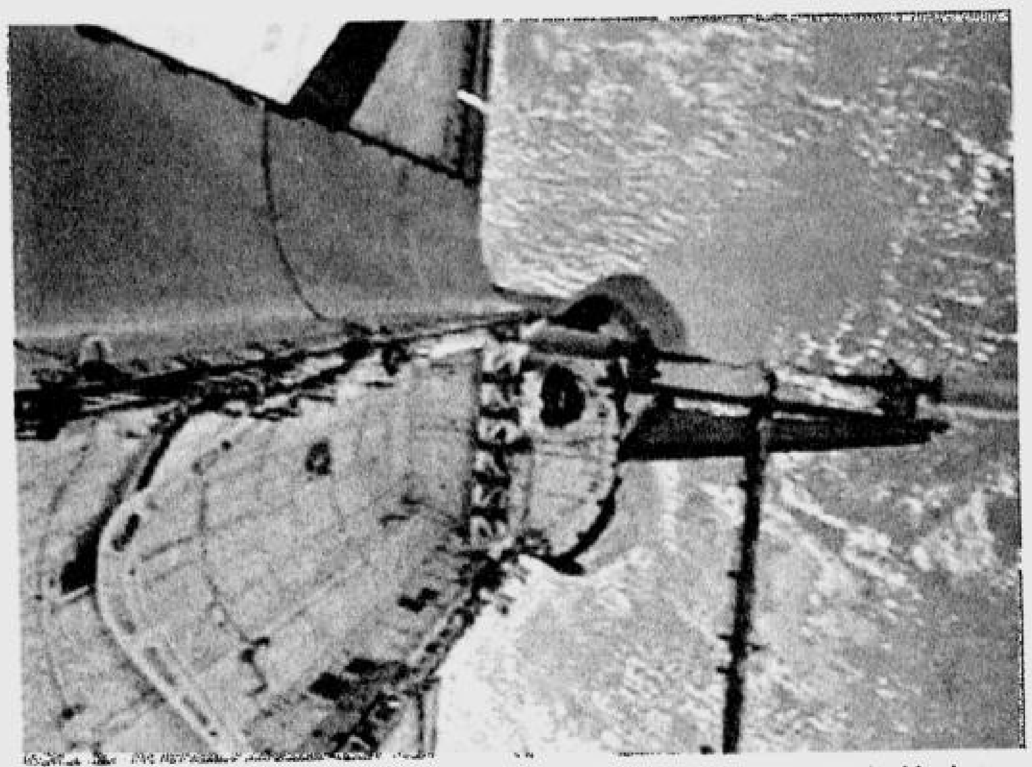
The report is also expected to discuss the role of Alexander Yakovlev, a senior purchasing officer, involved in awarding a series of contracts in the program, including the one to Cotecna.

Yakovlev, a Russian, resigned last month after the United Nations said he was under investigation for possible conflict of interest in helping his son get a job with a company that did business with the United Nations. That company was not involved in the oil-for-food program.

Nevertheless, the Volcker inquiry sealed Yakovlev's office.

Its investigators are also looking into his personal financial records, sources close to the probe said.

The Volcker panel was commissioned by Annan to examine charges of corruption in the program, which was designed to ease the impact on ordinary Iraqis of UN sanctions imposed in August 1990 after Baghdad's troops invaded Kuwait. *Reuters*



THE EMPTY payload bay of Discovery with the earth in the background shown in this photo taken Aug. 5. REUTERS/NASA TV

Bad weather delays shuttle landing

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—Cloudy skies over its Florida landing site on Monday forced Nasa to postpone the return to Earth of space shuttle Discovery on the first shuttle mission since the 2003 Columbia accident.

Although the clouds were dissipating and conditions appeared to be acceptable for a landing, Nasa said it was taking no chances and delayed the shuttle's return for at least a day.

"We just can't get comfortable with the instability of the situation," astronaut Ken Ham radioed from Mission Control in Houston to the astronauts on the shuttle to tell them they would be staying in space another day.

Flight directors tried twice on Monday to bring Discovery back to Earth after 13 days in orbit but decided the weather was too unpredictable to be sure the spaceship's commander, Eileen Collins, would have a clear view of the 4.8-km, canal-lined runway at the Kennedy Space Center.

Barring emergencies, Nasa will only land the shuttle if there is good visibility for the approach to the runway and no rain or thunderstorms within about 56 km.

Touchdown was retargeted for either 5:07 a.m. EDT (5:07 p.m. in Manila) or 6:43 a.m. EDT (10:43 p.m.) on Tuesday in Florida, or 8:12 a.m. EDT (12:12 p.m.) at the primary backup site in California.

Shuttle program deputy manager Wayne Hale said Nasa also would staff its second backup landing site in New Mexico. The ship has enough supplies to safely stay in orbit through Wednesday, if weather or technical issues prevent landing on Tuesday.

The landing will bring to a close Nasa's first shuttle mission since Discovery's sister ship, Columbia, broke apart over Texas on Feb. 1, 2003, 16 minutes from landing.

Nasa did not know that the ship's wing had been critically damaged during launch by a piece of falling debris. As Columbia plowed through the atmosphere 16 days later for landing, superheated gases blasted into the hole, melting the ship. The seven astronauts on board died.

While Discovery's descent will test the mettle of Mission Control, for the first time in the 24-year shuttle program, ground controllers know the condition of the shuttle's heat shield.

After the accident, Nasa developed on-orbit laser imaging tools and inspection techniques, which not only were tested during Discovery's flight, but important in determining that an unplanned spacewalk was needed to make a minor but unprecedented repair on the ship's heat shield. *Reuters*

ABC's Peter Jennings dies of cancer

WASHINGTON—Peter Jennings, a Canadian journalist who had won over America with his congenial and matter-of-fact style in the anchor chair of ABC News, died late Sunday after a brief bout with lung cancer, his family and employer announced. He was 67.

JENNINGS AP

A mild-mannered man with keen news judgment, Jennings had been with ABC television for more than 40 years, more than 20 of them as anchor of "World News Tonight," covering seminal events from the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement of the 1960s to the 1989 collapse of the Berlin Wall and the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

His contribution to journalism, acknowledged ABC News President David Westin, "cannot be overstated or captured in words alone."

Jennings has not been on the air since April 5 when, fighting back tears, he told stunned viewers he had lung cancer and needed time to fight the deadly disease. He added he hoped to learn from almost 10 million cancer-stricken Americans "how to cope with the facts of life that none of us anticipated."

He underwent an aggressive chemotherapy treatment and has resulted in significant weight loss and made his voice hoarse. But it was no match to the malign tumor, first detected just last spring, his colleagues said.

Jennings was a former smoker who quit in 1988 but had a relapse in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks when he admitted he needed something to alleviate tension that came with his job.

In a brief statement, the family said Jennings had died peacefully in his New York apartment, surrounded by his wife Kayce Freed, children Elizabeth and Christopher as well as his sister, Sarah Jennings. "He knew he had lived a good life," the family added.

Born in Toronto on July 29, 1938, Jennings began learning the ropes from his father, Charles Jennings, a leading journalist at Canadian Broadcasting Corp. and a prominent television correspondent in Canada.

But his debut in America was rocky. A good-looking man with a sharp wit, he first became the ABC evening news anchor in 1965, when he was just 26.

But going head-to-head with competitors like Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley proved to be difficult. Lower than expected ratings, his Canadian English and mistakes stemming from inexperience with US realities raised a few eyebrows and led to his temporary replacement in 1968.

Undaunted, Jennings went to work to Beirut, establishing in 1968 the first US television news bureau in the Arab world. He also covered the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, when Palestinian terrorists took Israeli athletes hostage.

In 1975, he moved to Washington to become the news anchor of ABC's morning program "A.M. America." Three years later, he was named foreign desk anchor for "World News Tonight" and moved up to full anchorship of the program in 1983.

Jennings was honored with 16 Emmys, two George Foster Peabody and many other awards.

Jennings' passing completes a generational change in the news divisions of all three major US television networks.

NBC's Tom Brokaw retired in December while Dan Rather of the CBS Evening News departed in March amid a scandal triggered by broadcasting an error-riddled story about President George W. Bush's service in the National Guard during the Vietnam War. *AFP*

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Plugging the drain

EDITORIAL

THE BRAIN drain in the country's medical profession has gone from bad to worse, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said last week. He noted that about 6,000 licensed doctors were enrolled in nursing schools, preparing for lucrative jobs abroad.

Duque said other professionals like accountants, engineers and lawyers have also been shifting to nursing. The exodus of nurses and doctors (many of whom have turned to nursing) may soon create a crisis in the country's health care system.

This phenomenon is only the latest development in the brain drain that began to sap the intellectual, professional and manpower talent of the country in the 1970s. In 2002, about 200,000 professionals, associate professionals and technicians left the Philippines for better-paying jobs abroad. Data for 2003 and 2004 are not yet available, but it would be safe to assume that each year a minimum of 100,000 professionals leave for greener pastures. That means that about 400,000 of the country's best and brightest have left in the past three years, depriving their own people of their talents and services.

The biggest incentive for seeking employment abroad is financial. For instance, nurses abroad get $3,000 to $4,000 a month. Compare that with the $150 to $250 that nurses get and the $300 to $800 that doctors earn in the Philippines. In addition, these health professionals enjoy greater opportunities for professional advancement in the developed countries.

Teachers are leaving the country in droves to work as housemaids abroad. The brightest teachers are in great demand because most of them double as governesses and tutors to their foreign employers' children. This has contributed to the deterioration of the educational system that has to make do with the mostly mediocre teachers who are left behind.

One can go down the line—from scientists to engineers to educators and managers—and one will come to the same conclusion: the brain drain is depriving the nation of a great deal of talent that could help push its social and economic development. And the irony is that this phenomenon is benefiting developed countries that should be helping poor countries like the Philippines instead.

What can be done to stop, or at least, to reduce the brain drain from the Philippines?

Ultimately, the answer would be to accelerate the economic development of the country so that corporations and other institutions would be able to pay salaries that can compare favorably with those paid by employers abroad. But given the present state of political turmoil and economic downturn, that is not likely to come in the near future.

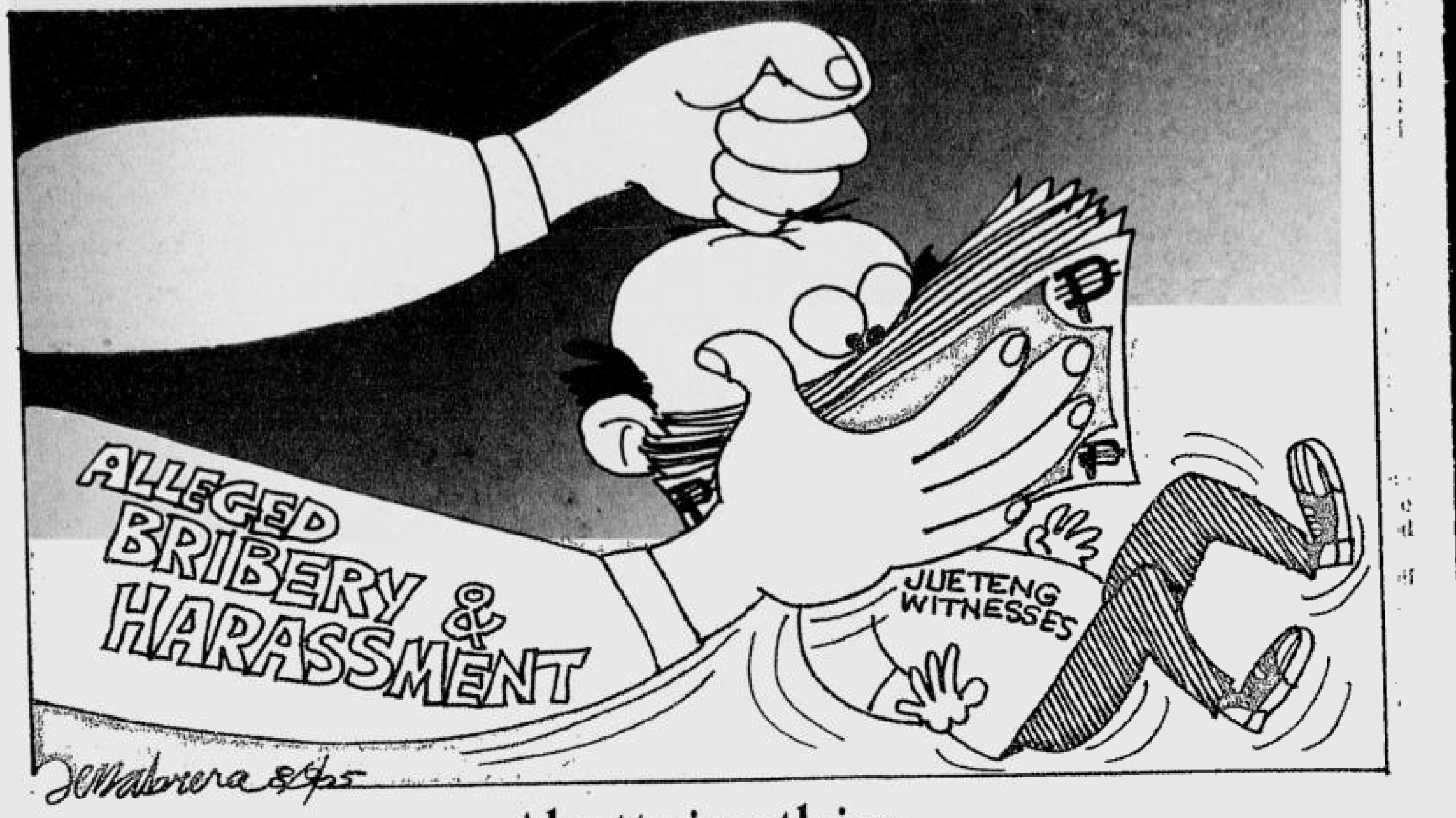
In the case of doctors and nurses, it has been suggested that the government require them to render one year of service in the Philippines for each year that they spend in the university or college. Another suggestion is to give tax breaks to hospitals, especially those in the provinces where people have no easy access to health services.

Another option would be to have government and financial institutions provide starting capital for doctors and nurses, particularly in the provinces, for the establishment of hospitals and other medical facilities. This should help create a class of health professionals-entrepreneurs who would not only manage their own hospitals but also give employment to other people.

Professionals should be made to realize that they have a responsibility to pay back the country which provided them with a good education without which they would not be able to find lucrative jobs abroad. So, in the case of the health professionals, in particular, the government could charge expatriate doctors and nurses some form of registration fee, the proceeds of which could be used to improve the country's educational and research infrastructure.

Scientists, engineers and technologists could be induced to remain in the country if they were given higher salaries and more incentives and benefits, including opportunities for study and research that would make them grow professionally.

We can always appeal to the social conscience and patriotism of the professionals and ask them to help their countrymen first before they serve the people of other nations. The government could create a better working environment, one with less corruption and nepotism. But it would be best if, over the long term, the government could accelerate economic development, attract more foreign investment, and help set up companies and institutions that would pay Filipino professionals higher salaries and give them other benefits and privileges.



Abattoir ethics

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"WHY should we believe you?" Channel 7's Maki Pulido lobbed that question at the improbably named Michaelangelo Zuce, self-confessed bagman. That left the Senate's "star witness" on alleged 2004 election fraud "tongue-tied," columnist Marichu Villanueva chuckled.

"Skewer bastards with tough questions" is counsel that editors drill into cub reporters. The probing query can help sift fact from spin and reality from propaganda. They curb lynch-mob journalism.

They're also indispensable for a country steeped in what Sen. Miriam Santiago calls "slaughterhouse politics."

Another bagman, this time from the *jueteng* probe, confirms this fact. Richard Garcia wailed that opposition legislators "coached him and other witnesses" on how to link the President's family to jueteng.

His covert drillmasters in perjury, he claimed, included Senators Panfilo Lacson, Aquilino Pimentel and Jinggoy Estrada and Rep. Ronaldo Zamora. "The twists and turns" ...of this case have started to loop themselves around Lacson," an INQUIRER editorial notes. "He now has to extricate himself."

But senators like Jose Laurel, Claro Recto, Lorenzo Tañada and Raul Roco never had to extricate themselves. They never rigged testimony. Aside from intellectual stature and integrity, they had that exquisite moral sense we Filipinos call delicadeza.

Far too many of their successors unfortunately work by ethics of the abattoir. And "slaughterhouse morals" sap institutional credibility.

The Marcos and Estrada kleptocracies devalued the presidency. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's governance, stripped of values other than what is expedient, eroded it further.

Rodrigo Perez Jr., Hilario Davide and Christian Monsod were exemplary Commission on Elections stewards. But Luzviminda Tancangco and Virgilio Garcillano debased that.

The "Craven Eleven" senators sealed the second envelope in Erap's impeachment. Dwarfs like Tito Sotto, Gringo Honasan and Lito Lapid replaced the likes of Lorenzo Sumulong, Oscar Ledesma or Emmanuel Pelaez. Thus, we're saddled with a diminished Senate over the years.

"The whole lot lack credibility, not for want of competence, but of morals," Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture's Melba Padilla Maggay writes in Patmos Features. "Our leaders have so alienated themselves from the people by their utter lack of integrity."

People are roused by today's moral rot but not enough to pour out into the streets in massive numbers, Maggay observes in "Ambiguities and the Search for a Moral Center in Governance." In today's crisis, "no line in the sand bids us to take sides with the resolute force" of earlier emergencies.

Left, Right and religious groups, like those of Bro. Eddie Villanueva, forge tactical alliances without agreement on aims. These ambiguities shut off clear-cut responses to positions staked by hardline partisans.

Most of today's responses are "relics from failed social experiments"—coups, martial law, a junta or badly contrived imitations of "people power"—Maggay notes.

People reject murky plots of the ruling elite. They're "wary about calls for extra-constitutional means of transferring power." One finds a "growing consensus to work within the disciplines of our constitutional framework."

Yet, today's impasse could open a new way out of obsolete response boxes, Maggay thinks. We must link to "that spiritual center out of which our people make most of their decisions, including politics."

"Our indigenous culture is such that people get roused only where the battle between good and evil rages. We resonate best with issues that connect with the depths of our spiritual moorings as a people. Politics must touch that core of values... (seen) now and again, in surprising displays of momentary solidarity."

She cites "the calming effect" of the Catholic Bishops Conference statement as an example. "The opposition was reduced to mumbling in corners, even as they whip up yet another wave of protests. The middle forces were quietly nudged into deeper reflection."

"Not even in Latin America, where countries are also predominantly Catholic, has the Church such authority and power to influence a nation's political temper," she adds.

Analysts claim this is partly due to "residues of the late Cardinal Sin's forceful moral leadership at critical times" and the Church's "almost medieval hold on centers of power." Maggay disagrees. "This influence is rooted in the very character of our people, at its core deeply and unabashedly spiritual," she writes. "This is why our prayer rallies also morph into political meetings."

"This culture produces folk heroes and heroines that fuse within themselves the political and the spiritual," like Hermano Pule in the mid-1800s or Cory Aquino in 1986. They have power when they give voice to what the people sense to be the Santong Boses. "Our millenarian movements call that the Spirit."

Priests or politicians lose that potency (when) seen to lack *malinis na loob*, or selfless service. Religious leaders lose their following when they shift from prophecy to politicking.

"Today, as in previous crises, there is such a deep longing among our people for a moral center in governance," Maggay points out. The Arroyo government's future hangs to "the extent to which it regains credibility by fulfilling this expectation."

Neither will the opposition meet that yearning by a treadmill of seamy bagmen, cadged from the abattoir—and coached by covert drillmasters to perjure.

(*E-mail : juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph*)

The living and the dead

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S enough to make you believe God is playing tricks on us. The one man who should have been president of this country will never be so. He is dead—felled by cancer. He would have been 64 on Oct. 26. Indeed, the one man who was voted president of this country will never be so. He too is dead—felled by a stroke. He would have been 66 on Aug. 20. They are, of course, Raul Roco and Fernando Poe Jr.

One is tempted to say that the way things are going, Panfilo Lacson and Eddie Villanueva should seriously worry about their health. But Lacson may always rest easy in the thought that only the good die young.

God's trick, which must raise questions about the nature of divine humor, is that the one woman who never deserved to become president of this country in 2001 and never got to be voted so in 2004 is still there, alive and, well, if not kicking at least clinging to the throne so tenaciously you can hear nails scraping wood.

I did hear someone express the thought last weekend that maybe we did right not to vote for Raul Roco. Indeed, that maybe they did right to prevent FPJ from taking office. Or else we would not have a president right now. Maybe God in his infinite wisdom spared us this pass.

Well, I don't know that wisdom, divine or not, infinite or not, may ever be associated with GMA's presence in Malacañang, or even on earth. At the very least, we don't have a president right now either, if by that is meant someone who got voted into power and is leading the nation forward. What we have is someone pretending to be so and leading the nation to ruin. At the very most, the briefest tenure by an enlightened president—or never mind enlightened, mind only legitimate—is still worlds better than the longest one by a tyrant—or never mind tyrant, mind only usurper. Either Roco or FPJ would easily have been a blessing for this country, however fleetingly they would have passed before our eyes.

Instead, we have a curse. And one that threatens to haunt us all our lives.

A couple of weeks ago, during the Sona, GMA told us that our monumental problems today do not owe to her but to a political culture that is grinding us underfoot. She was at least half-right. She would have been fully right if she had said our monumental problems owed to her and a political culture that was grinding us underfoot. The two are not contradictory, they are complementary. Indeed, they are more than complementary, they are one and the same. Roco showed during his life that you need not be part of that political culture. All you have to do, as the anti-drug crusade puts it, is just say no.

I remember that one of the debates in Roco's camp during the elections was whether to accept "donations" from people like Lucio Tan. Some believed he should, not just to improve his financial position but his psychological projection—he was being backed by "wise money." Roco refused, though Tan has roots in Naga as well. Those donations do not come free, he said, they carry with them more strings than are needed to tie up Florante to a tree in the woods. His position was better to lose with a light heart than to win with a heavy burden.

I remember as well that yet another debate in his camp was the wisdom of fielding Hermie Aquino and the people who eventually filled up his senatorial slate. Though Hermie was an Aquino, his detractors said, his name did not ring a bell. Neither did Aksyon's senatorial candidates. Roco's position was that better lesser known lights than well-known *trapos*. Better to lose fighting the good fight than to win peddling the bad cause.

And I remember that the most critical debate in his camp was whether he should continue to run or not after he came back from the United States when his cause seemed lost. When his supporters had lost heart and the voters were turning away from the propaganda that sick presidents were not good for the country. Roco refused to quit, arguing that, true enough, sick presidents were bad for the country, but there was sickness and there was sickness. Some were sick only in the body, others were sick in the mind. Presidents who were sick in the body but sound in the mind cured a sick country. Presidents who were sound in the body but sick in the mind only made the country sicker.

Roco reposed his faith instead in the people. We had no end of conversations when I would argue before him that this country, more than America, qualified for Mencken's savage barb that "Nobody yet lost a buck underestimating the popular taste." Which was true most of all of elections. He insisted on carrying his campaign on a high plane, based on ideas, scorning the song-and-dance routine. He kept telling me that the Filipino voter was not stupid, and that this voter could be convinced to make the right choice given the compelling logic of survival. He was unshakeable in that faith. He reposed his faith in particular in the youth, whom he truly believed was the hope of this seemingly hopeless country. You can't lose, he said, with the youth behind you.

All the while GMA was soliciting donations from Bong Pineda, wooing the Marcoses and the Erap camps, dropping the charges against Ping Lacson to encourage him to not quit, paying off Noli de Castro to run as running mate, leaving no centavo in the public treasury unturned, and otherwise flailing furiously at the very horse she now says is trampling us underfoot.

Truly, presidents who are sick in the body but hale in the mind can cure the country while presidents who are hale in the body but sick in the mind can only make the country sicker. Even more truly, some dead are more alive than the living, and some living are more alive than the dead.

Cruz no match for Lacson

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

ARCHBISHOP Oscar Cruz sounds bitter about having lost some of his witnesses allegedly due to bribery and other pressure tactics of the Palace. But the problem with the Dagupan prelate is that he had counted so much on the testimony of people who have little or no credibility and whose lives and finances appear to be in tatters, making them susceptible to all kinds of propositions. The witnesses have been made pawns in the power play between two opposing forces, so it's not surprising that the witnesses would mouth the line of the highest bidder. This is the problem with the Senate's *jueteng* probe. It seems to have run aground because it was clearly conducted in aid of the opposition's plot to destabilize the Arroyo administration. If the Senate is serious in understanding this illegal numbers game and stamping it out by way of legislation, it should take the hearings away from the heat of politics and the glare of the media. Then it will get somewhere. But the way the jueteng hearings have been conducted, they were only good for grandstanding by the senators and character assassinations by the witnesses.

* * *

But the more serious problem for the archbishop is that he does not seem to have control over the people he had lined up for the jueteng hearings. Obviously, his witnesses were all recruited by Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a master in political maneuvers. The naive archbishop has been no match for the wily ex-policeman. Last week, Lacson was accused of bribing or attempting to bribe with money and US visas (!) two provincial election officials, Ferdinand Gerardo of Pampanga and Gilbert Palogan of Bulacan, through the senator's henchman, a former PNP general, in order to corroborate the account of Michaelangelo Zuce. But the two provincial elections officials decided instead to seek the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation. The conspiracy plot cooked up by Lacson has begun to unravel, panicking the opposition in the House which is pushing the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

* * *

Last week, on my way home, I noticed the appearance of a lot of posters that read: "GMA loves martial law." At the bottom of the posters were the words "Donated by Mayor Lito Atienza."

I checked them out with the mayor and he said it was "a big joke" and a "very serious stupidity." He added, "Anyone who knew me from way back would know that I would never accept martial law." He pointed out that he was twice imprisoned during the martial law regime and that he fought it vigorously as a member of the opposition.

I know this for a fact, for I was then covering for Mr. & Ms Magazine the budding and fragile opposition to Marcos, which counted, among others, with then Assemblyman Atienza of Manila in the Batasang Pambansa in the 1984 elections. I suspect that the posters purporting to show Atienza favoring a pro-martial law stance for GMA are part of the black propaganda against him as well as GMA. Such posters serve to alienate in one sweep the poor, the Left and all other sectors that had suffered in that unlamented regime of Marcos.

* * *

Reactions from the Filipinos overseas to the political turmoil in the country have filtered in. During the President's State of the Nation Address two weeks ago, Ilocos Norte Rep. Roquito Ablan of the administration coalition related that he had just returned from London where he was guest of the huge Filipino community there at their annual barrio fiesta. Ablan said that the representatives of some 28 big Pinoy organizations registered with him their strong sentiment against the political instability, which they fear could even affect them in the United Kingdom.

From Rome, the famed Filipino sculptor and former sector representative of the OFWs during the Ramos era, Tomas Concepcion, wrote this column to say that the 100,000 OFWs in Italy are "distressed by the threat of remnants of the Marcos dictatorship to the Arroyo presidency." He said that in consultations with workers in Italy, it was clear that 8 out of 10 support GMA. "These are the Filipinos who with their hard work and much sacrifice continue to support the economy with their $10 billion yearly remittances from overseas," said Concepcion. "Almost the same number would not be for a Lacson leadership due to his record of no respect for human rights during the Marcos regime," he said, adding that the Human Rights Commission never issued a certificate of good conduct to him even during the Ramos administration. Concepcion also said that not a few OFWs expressed nostalgia for the Ramos leadership "when we gained international respect and prestige for political and economic stability and moral leadership." He cited the remarks of Apolonio Rabang, who opined, *"Maski kami naghihirap dito at malaking sacrificio, sana naman tumino na ang politika sa Maynila."*

* * *

From the apostolate corner: Troubled married couples who need help in rebuilding their failing relationships can still enlist in the Retrouvaille Weekend this Friday, Aug. 12 to Sunday, Aug. 14. Retrouvaille is a worldwide ministry for troubled marriages, whose base is in Toronto, Canada. The healing weekend seminar will be held at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Tagaytay City. I have been endorsing this reconciliation program for ailing marriages for many years now, and I know it has helped many married couples reunite and rekindle their relationship. Many miracles have happened at the Retrouvaille seminar, which is a wonderful thing in this age when the institution of marriage has been under tremendous attacks and the moral fabric of Filipino society has been so weakened. Call Fr. Ely Santos at 0918-921-0184, or Ding and Belen at 0916-573-0097 or Danny and Neomi at 0916-395-4642 and 681-5746.

Subverting the Constitution

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT'S really a shame—no, a scandal—that the best instincts for political and social reform that the framers of the 1987 Constitution brought to the creation of our basic law should have been twisted, mangled and corrupted by the very people sworn to uphold it.

The three-part Special Report by Jerry Esplanada, on election irregularities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), specifically on the dubious conduct and counting of the votes for party-list groups, illustrates how national and local politicians, with the connivance of election officials, have twisted to their own advantage innovations in the Constitution that were meant to set our political system on the road to reform.

Ironically, one of the sources Esplanada relied on for this exposé was the "man of the hour," former Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, now being sought for his testimony on alleged election irregularities in Mindanao, as captured in his phone-tapped conversations with, to use lawyerly language, "a person who sounds remarkably like President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo."

Unaware perhaps just how notorious he would become in the next few months, Garcillano told Esplanada that election anomalies take place in Mindanao "either because of money or pressure from politicians." On hindsight, the phrase can be construed as either a bland admission of guilt or at least complicity, or a symptom of system-wide rot, with payoffs and influence-peddling shrugged off as "part of the game."

Garcillano could at least be credited with honesty (or perhaps frankness would be the better term) in his explanation of several "puzzling" electoral results. More frank, at least, than Comelec Chairman Benjamin Abalos who these days seems content to pin the blame for all of the poll body's ills and sins on the "missing in action" Garcillano.

* * *

ONE of the more promising areas for political reform in the 1987 Constitution was the provision on the party-list system, which would open up membership in the House of Representatives to representatives of marginalized and underrepresented sectors. Under this provision, and as provided for in the party-list law, 20 percent of all seats in the House would be reserved for party-list representatives, who would be representing not themselves or a specific district, but rather their sectoral or multi-sectoral parties. As set forth in a recent Supreme Court decision, parties need to prove to the Comelec that they truly represent and are composed of marginalized and underrepresented sectors, some of which were specified in the Constitution.

Since the 1998 elections, party-list groups have come nowhere near the 50 or so seats to which they're entitled. One reason for this was that more than 100 accredited party-list groups were required to fight it out for a very small "universe" of voters, since only a few were aware of the party-list system.

Another reason was suggested in the special report, where Garcillano bemoans the "laxity" of the Comelec in accrediting party-list groups that were obviously unqualified under the Supreme Court's criteria. The so-called "Mindanao expert" of the Comelec also said politicians and political parties had been funding the campaigns of party-list groups, if not creating party-list groups of their own.

* * *

SO EVEN as they talked through one side of their mouths, piously declaring their support for the struggling genuine party-list groups and hailing the system as a promising innovation in politics, politicians were busy subverting the same system, taking advantage of the party-list potential for creating an even wider base of influence and power.

Given the "experimental" nature of the party-list system and the relative inexperience in electoral matters of the groups that chose to participate, one would have hoped the Comelec took a more proactive stance in protecting party-list groups from being corrupted or co-opted, at least not this soon.

The Comelec, for one, was awfully remiss in educating the public about the party-list system, how to choose the parties, and even what these party-list groups were. Comelec officials were also amazingly cavalier about the counting of party-list votes, setting these aside for counting "later," after the votes for local and national posts were posted. Indeed, the final results of party-list contests in ARMM areas have yet to be determined, with the Comelec failing to act on several petitions regarding shocking "statistical anomalies" in the results. Even Garcillano expressed shock at the brazen cheating, with more votes for party-list groups counted than there were registered voters in these provinces.

* * *

ONE party-list nominee was told point-blank by a local Comelec official that if she wanted her party and herself to make it to the Congress, she would need to pay several millions for the number of votes she needed.

This then would make a plausible explanation for the "anomaly." With deals made left and right, somebody forgot to tally up the number of votes that had been padded onto the lists, thus the "excess."

Given that the Comelec has yet to embark on a serious investigation and formal hearing of the cases filed regarding the statistical wonders of the ARMM voting results, I can only wish it the best in the conduct of the ongoing elections for ARMM officials. I seriously doubt if ARMM residents would lend any credence to the results, given that they have first-hand experience with manufactured elections.

Before any move is made to amend the Constitution—which we have yet to fully implement, by the way—let's start by cleaning up the electoral system, and making sure that the real will of the people is expressed and obeyed.

The apostle of Mindanao

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

MOST of us believe that the evangelization of the Philippines began with the Augustinians and Fr. Andres de Urdaneta, who came with Miguel Lopez de Legaspi in 1567. However, Fr. Francisco Colin, S.J., in his "Labor Evangelica de los Obreros de la Compania de Jesus en las Islas Filipinas," calls St. Francis Xavier the first stone in the foundation of the Society in the Philippines, stating that the saint came in 1546. He preached in Mindanao (it is believed in Davao) in the months of September, October and November. In the 1890s, rumors persisted that the boulder that served as his altar could be found on the beach of Pundagitan beside the Cabo S. Agustin, which is the reason the inhabitants at one time called it Punta Altar. There's a sense of poetic justice here that after the Jesuits returned in 1859 from their expulsion, they were assigned the Mindanao missions.

In the summer of 1546, a caracoa with St. Francis on board was traveling from Amboina to Ternate over the curling waves of the Moluccan Sea in danger of being wrecked. There were all sorts of dangers in this area: not merely typhoons but pirates lay in wait for ships. The vessel was making its difficult path, between mountains of rough waters and resounding thunder. Harsh shouts from the sailors could be heard at each surge of a wave that threatened to overwhelm them as well as prayers below deck so that the bilge wouldn't go under water. After an arduous day's run, the lookout could not even see the other vessel that came in convoy. Its patron, the merchant Juan Galvan of hairy beard and thinning hair, had drowned in the waters of Ecuador.

From Amboina to Malacca, the ship passed by the south of Mindanao and land was sighted in this horseshoe-shaped cove half enclosed by the bay of Illana. Landing here the saint preached during those 18 days in Malay to a crowd of heretics and converts. These were the difficult and hard journeys of the evangelization missions.

St. Francis is also known as the Apostle of the Indies, having served in Ternate from 1546 to 1547. It was that he was seen sleeping on a cot made of the roots of trees and a pillow of *cabo negro* (a kind of palm leaf made into rope). Many converts were won after long debates in the language of the place. Tradition tells the miraculous story of the crab that found a crucifix on the bottom of the ocean and clutching it between his claws returned it to St. Francis on the beach at Tamalo.

St. Francis on Jan. 26 1548 wrote from Cochin to the Jesuit mother house in Rome: "I left the city of Moluco (Terrenate) for some islands that are 60 leagues from Moluco that are called the Isles of the Moro; in these isles were many places of Christians and many days had passed that no one (priest) had visited them because they were very isolated from India and because the natives had killed a secular priest who had gone there.

"On those islands, I baptized many creatures that I found to baptize and I remained there for three months. During that time, I visited many Christian settlements that brought me much consolation in the same manner that I brought them consolation.

"These islands are very dangerous because of the many internecine wars. They are savages, lacking books, nor do they know how to read or write and are people who poison those they don't like and in this manner they kill many. It is a rough land, mountainous and very difficult to walk. They lack material sustenance, wheat and wine.

"They do not know meat or any game animals. There are some pigs and there are many wild boars. Many places lack potable water. There is rice in abundance and many trees called *gagueros* (Pastells says these could be *buri* or coconut trees) that give bread and wine and other trees that from their bark clothes are made.

"There are on these islands a people called Tabaros that are gentiles that the pagans derive all their pleasure from killing them ... as well as many Christians. (It seems that there were Christian communities in Mindanao converted by the Portuguese. Pastells, who heavily annotated Fr Francisco Colin's "Labor Evangelica" and whose footnotes are sometimes more interesting than the text, tells us that the Christians in Mindanao were converted by Francisco de Castro, captain of a ship that came from Moluco which then belonged to a certain Galvao. In the fort of Terrenate were women from Mindanao who were Christians, married and had children with Portuguese.)

"One of these islands is subject to earthquakes and the reason is that on this island is a range that continuously spews fire and much ash. There were no hurricanes while I was there... For you to imagine how great are the earthquakes on that land, on the day of San Miguel while I was saying Mass, the earth trembled so horribly that I was afraid that the altar would be knocked down.

"Having visited all the Christian settlements I returned to Moluco where I stayed another three months."

Picking black

YOUNG BLOOD

Michelle Faulan Cheidjew

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I REMEMBER a television commercial which was popular when I was a kid. It was an ad about a brand of paint. Two black tribesmen, each trying to win the chief's favor, competed in a "who could paint more zebras" challenge (the zebras were made of cardboard). One tribesman went for brand X, while the other, knowing better, went for the product being advertised. Naturally, the one who went for brand X lost. What fascinated me most was when the defeated tribesman poured the white paint over his body. I have never forgotten how his ebony figure was engulfed by the white background.

The first time I saw the commercial I did not think it was selling paint. I thought that it was selling the color white.

The ad's impact went beyond my perception to that of the people around me. My family and neighbors would kid me to try using white paint "*para pumuti ka agad*" (so that I would have a white skin fast). Although they meant it as a joke, I saw it as a possibility.

The reason I took the ad literally was that I was already using whitening products even then. No, it wasn't out of childish vanity; I was not the type who rummaged through some adult's dresser to try on make-up. I did it because my grandmother told me to.

"Nanay" (as I called her) was a white beauty, thanks to her Chinese blood. But my *mestiza* mother married a black man and, according to nature's formula, a white woman and a black man produced a black kid, which was me.

When I was young, I thought that Nanay had made it her lifetime mission to transform her black and perpetually ridiculed *apo* into a white girl to be perpetually admired. At home, we had a steady supply of whitening soaps, creams, lotions and what-have-you to make Nanay's dream apo a reality. To my young mind, she seemed ready to do just about anything to make me white. It even occurred to me that Nanay was considering something as drastic as surgery (like the one that the King of Pop had), except that we didn't have the resources needed.

So when the ad appeared, I could not help but worry (ridiculous as it may seem) that she would go as far as pouring white paint over me to achieve her goal. She seemed so determined, even desperate.

All those whitening products hardly made a dent on my skin's melanin content. Obviously, no one can reverse one's genetic make-up. My genes dictated black to be the color of my skin and no whitening cream or lotion could alter that. It was also apparent that the money Nanay was spending on those products was merely going down the drain.

I guess Nanay knew that, too. But in her case, acceptance didn't follow awareness.

The products I used could not change my complexion, but they greatly affected the way I saw myself. Before Nanay made me use those creams, I was aware that my complexion set me apart from other brown kids. But though they called me names, I did not really make a big deal of it. Color, to me, was just color.

But I was wrong. Dead wrong. For when Nanay started buying those creams, it dawned on me that something about the way I looked was "wrong" and needed to be changed. What she did gave me the message that my complexion was something I must get rid of. Since Nanay took care of me since birth, I looked up to her as the authority on everything. Her actions were my truth. When she said that I should be white, I agreed and stopped being black.

Now I think I am beginning to understand what moved Nanay to do those things. I have ruled out the idea that she harbored contempt for the black race. I believe she made me use those products more out of love than intolerance. I guess it was her way of shielding me from people who believe that black is beautiful, except when it's the color of your skin. Although her efforts to protect me proved disastrous to my self esteem, it will not blot out the fact that Nanay recognized the evils of discrimination and tried to do something about it.

One time, Nanay accompanied me to the park. We were walking towards a vacant swing when some kids began yelling, "Baluga! Baluga!" Nanay did not confront or reprimand those kids. Instead, she looked me in the eye and said, "They will always look down on you because..."

I did not hear her complete the sentence; I already knew what she meant. In her eyes I saw sympathy and a strong resolve never to let incidents like that happen again.

My days of using whitening products are over, and I no longer see the black tribesman and his cardboard zebras on TV. But white still abounds, not just on television ads. Whether in bars of soap or bottles of lotion, the preference for the color predominates.

I guess there is nothing wrong with wanting to look better. But there is something wrong when we rely solely on color or appearance to accept others. No one gets to see beauty unless one learns to appreciate what is real or natural.

Color is perception; it can spell inclusion or exclusion. Color can be status; it can mean superiority or inferiority. Color is an idea or an identity. But color is a choice, and I choose to be black.

Michelle Faulan Cheidjew, 18, is a 3rd year BA English Studies student at University of the Philippines, Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

THEY SAID

Miracle of plenty

"You know the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes? What if Jesus never really performed a miracle to multiply the food? What if half of the people around him actually had bread and fish in their pouches all along and were just moved to share what little food they had with the whole gathering until there was enough food for everyone?"

—RockEd Philippines founder P. Therese "Gang" Badoy on the kind of impact RockEd would like to achieve.

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The 'ifs' for RP to take off

OUSTING Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from office is not the magical solution to our problems. It will not pull our nation from the morass of poverty. But replacing our system of government through Charter change will be worse. Her state of the nation address was dismaying but, at least, I agree with her on one thing: "Ours is a country divided."

Yes, our country will not be able to take off because we are not united as a team. There is a Philippines of power-hungry leaders living in luxury; and a Philippines of a starving people whose power to vote has been exploited and undermined by the first Philippines.

No, it is not our system of government but our leaders whom we must change. Cha-cha will only dance us to hell because our present leaders have no respect for honesty and justice. For what are we teaching our children by ignoring the Hello Garci scandal? That it is OK to cheat?

GMA said: "Perhaps we politicians have done our best; but maybe our best is not enough, given the present system. Perhaps, we have strained the present political system to its final limit." Yes, our politicians have done their best to keep themselves in power illegally. Their best in this is more than enough. *Tama na!*

What more sacrifice do the Filipinos need to make? Two-thirds of the Filipinos are living below the poverty line while Mike Arroyo doesn't care about staying in a $20,000-a-night hotel suite. What more does GMA want Filipinos to do? Miss breakfast and lunch just so they can afford to pay more taxes?

For as long as we have dishonest, corrupt and wasteful leaders, our country will never move forward.

If only the present administration stopped the use of luxury cars by government, then our people wouldn't have to pay more taxes on their meager income. If only Congress abolished the pork barrel, then the government could allot more funds for roads and education.

If only our courts wouldn't sell their decisions to the rich and the powerful, then the poor wouldn't feel oppressed. If only our journalists could be given protection, then we could preserve the sanctity of democracy.

If only the nation's sacrifices were shared by the ruled and rulers alike, our country would now be on the verge of taking off.

—MILES RABIE,
Tucson, Arizona, USA,
tindahan_ni_aling_kamote@yahoo.com

So, there was no contract?

WITH ALL due respect to Sec. Rigoberto Tiglao of the Presidential Management Staff, I would like to set the record straight.

In his letter (PDI, 8/3/05), Tiglao twitted me for quitting a post I did not hold.

Perhaps, I should also ask him this question: Why am I holding a copy of a check issued to Corazon Guidote dated July 12, 2005 by the Treasurer of the Philippines for the account of the Office of the Communications Director (OCD) through the Land Bank of the Philippines worth P22,500, and duly signed by OCD Undersecretary Claro Fernandez and OCD Director of Finance Alan Pasumbal? The details of the check bear the following: Land Bank check number 539601, fund number 101, Agency number A0010, Area 0078, Allotment number 793.

I tendered my resignation on July 8, 2005, to take effect on July 15 to give me some time to wind up my responsibilities. I also have with me an unsigned Contract of Service handed to me by the OCD for the extension of my services as presidential consultant for investor relations for the period July 1 to Dec. 31, 2005, which I didn't bother to sign because I had already been contemplating to leave my post; hence the need to resign.

By the way, I didn't collect the check despite several calls by the OCD for me to collect it. I found it prudent, however, to have it photocopied, just in case.

—CORAZON P. GUIDOTE,
former presidential consultant
for investor relations

Wrong on PCIJ

EVERYTHING that Victor Agustin wrote about the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism in his column (PDI, 7/29/05) is wrong. Everything.

First of all, PCIJ is a completely different entity from Newsbreak. The entity called "Newsbreak/PCIJ" doesn't exist except in Agustin's mind. Secondly, we get grants mainly to train journalists (free of charge) and to produce journalism manuals. These are grants to help raise the standards of Philippine journalism, not investments or equity, because we are a nonstock, nonprofit company. By what stretch of the imagination, therefore, can we be accused of skirting the constitutional ban on foreign media ownership?

Thirdly, no one in the PCIJ is even remotely connected with any foreign news organization. I was with The New York Times from 1986 to 1995 and have severed any relations with them since then. Finally, unlike Newsbreak, we have no formal arrangement that allows our stories to be carried by the INQUIRER website. And much to our regret, the newspaper has not printed PCIJ reports for some time. Agustin cannot, therefore, say that the INQUIRER is incurring risks by publishing our reports.

This is not the first time Agustin has written erroneously about the PCIJ. We hope he gets his facts right the next time he writes about us.

—SHEILA S. CORONEL,
executive director,
Philippine Center
for Investigative Journalism,
Unit 107 E Criselda II Bldg.,
107 Sct. De Guia St., Quezon City

THE PCIJ publishes "I" magazine and books and its investigative reports are published in newspapers.
—VIC AGUSTIN

Misunderstood statement

I WRITE in response to the letter of the good Msgr. Nico Bautista (PDI, 7/21/05) on my statement that the act of Bill Clinton having sex with Monica Lewinsky was a mere impropriety.

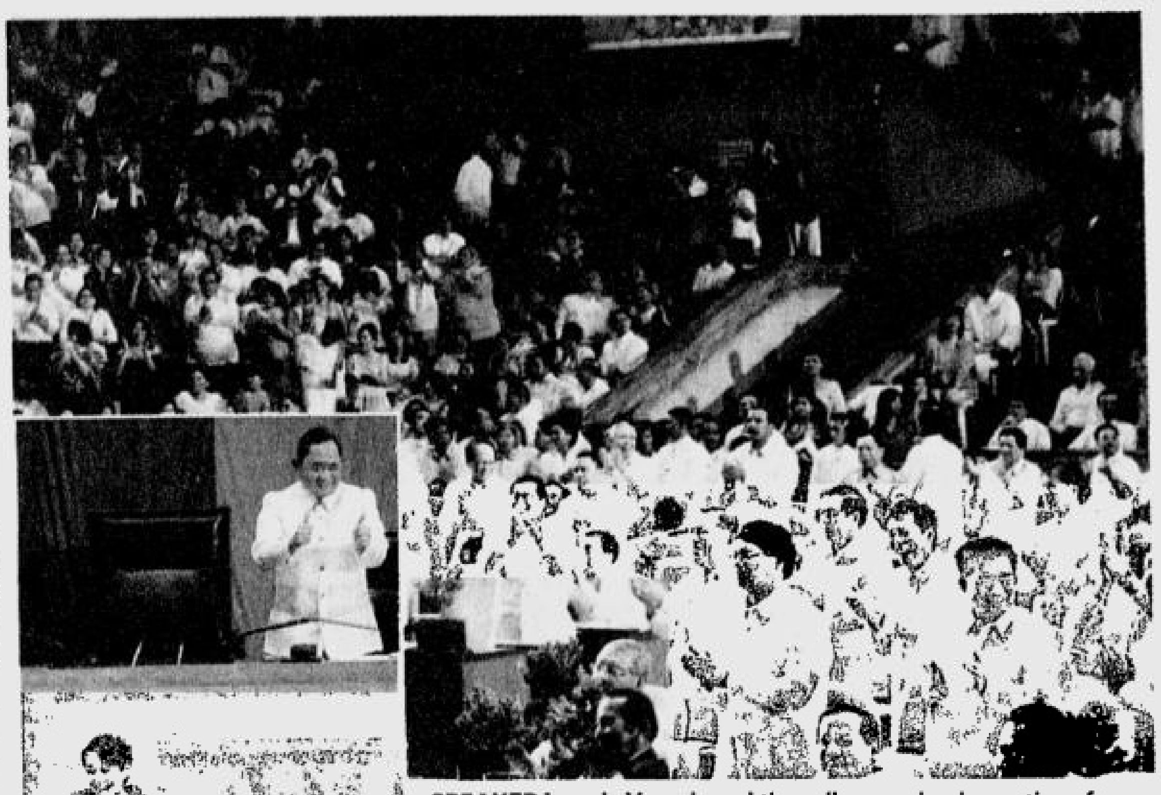
I apologize for creating an opportunity for my statement to be misunderstood. Fortunately, I know the difference between impropriety and immorality. And I don't even have to consult a dictionary. I have no doubt in my mind that the act(s) performed by both Clinton and Lewinsky were immoral in the first degree and of the highest category. The acts also deserve utmost condemnation by all.

I only used the term "impropriety" in relation to the issue of whether his immoral act(s) could be considered an impeachable offense under the US Constitution. In addition, I wanted to compare Clinton's act to "Gloriagate," which President Macapagal-Arroyo considered as a mere impropriety and not criminal or impeachable.

Let me clarify in no uncertain terms that both Clinton and GMA committed acts that were improper and immoral. The difference is that, I believe, the acts of GMA are impeachable and those of Clinton were considered by the US Congress itself as not impeachable.

In closing, let me reiterate my call to all for a return to morality so that we can focus on what really ails our terribly sick, beloved Philippines. I also pray for Monsignor Nico that, in the future, he will be less quick to judge. Or should I say misjudge? *Bangon*, Monsignor Nico!

—LUIS SISON, Bangon Pilipinas,
Alabang, Muntinlupa City



SPEAKER Jose de Venecia and the gallery applaud a portion of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address.

A vision of two presidents

ON TELEVISION, they appeared to be a bunch of battery-operated robots programmed to stand up and clap—on cue from Speaker Jose de Venecia—30 times for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as she delivered her state of the nation address. But there was nothing to applaud in a speech that was a cacophony of political and economic pretensions.

Ms Arroyo, obviously upon the proddings of her advisers, focused on the idea of amending the Constitution and changing our form of government. She did not say a bit about calls for her removal from office. His advisers must be adept in the sleight-of-hand trick of magicians. But they failed. Once again, her silence on the scandals surrounding her only reminded us that it is very hard to fool the people all the time. The people's clamor for Ms Arroyo's resignation even shifted to higher gear.

Pulse Asia's July 2-14 survey showed 73 percent of Filipinos want to see Ms Arroyo out of Malacañang either through resignation, impeachment, snap elections or even unconstitutional means.

What the Filipinos have in the Philippines right now is a president who has imposed herself on the nation and wants to rule without the consent of the governed. In a democracy, the governed, if extremely unhappy with their leaders, have the right to change the latter by whatever means possible.

The issue of charter change in order to adopt a new form of government is not a solution to Arroyo's unpopular leadership. The best solution so far is for Arroyo to undergo a full examination of conscience as suggested by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and to "cut cleanly," Marcos-style.

When Arroyo, acting in concert with Chief Justice Hilario Davide, grabbed the presidency from Estrada on Jan. 20, 2001 following protest demonstrations at Edsa, she said, "The President has not only lost moral authority to govern, but now has no government." Fast forward to Jan. 20, 2006, another politician may utter similar statements and proclaim himself "the new commander-in-chief" of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. So the vision of two former Philippine presidents put behind bars is not a remote possibility.

—GONZALO POLICARPIO
junpolicarpio@yahoo.com

A call to renew our faith in democratic institutions

WE, the undersigned faculty members and students of the Philippine Normal University, wish to express our stand on the ongoing political crisis facing our country. Mandated by our charter to develop progressive leaders in education, we reaffirm our belief in the core values of truth, justice and good governance.

We denounce the illegal and unethical acts that tended to subvert the true will of the people in the last elections. We deplore the use of state instrumentalities, (e.g., National Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice and the military) as tools for political repression. Seekers of truth and justice are labeled as "destabilizers." President Macapagal-Arroyo's acts fall far short of our professed ideals as indicated by her negative approval/trust ratings in the surveys. A prolonged political stalemate is not in the best interest of the country.

Therefore, we join former President Corazon Aquino, the 10 former Cabinet members of President Arroyo, DLSU, Association of Major Religious Superiors, NGOs and other institutions in calling Ms Arroyo to voluntarily resign as President and to allow her constitutional successor, Vice President Noli de Castro, to take over the presidency.

A President who has lost a substantial degree of credibility and trust in the eyes of her constituents cannot effectively govern. She can no longer inspire the citizens to pursue much-needed political and economic reforms.

Let's not allow radical groups from the extreme Left or Right to take advantage of the volatile situation in order to grab power and impose their political agenda on us. We pledge to join peaceful street protests and rallies if Ms Arroyo doesn't voluntarily resign.

We should likewise give serious thoughts to system change. We need fundamental changes, more than mere changes of personalities in government, the result of the rivalry for power among the elite. For too long, wealth and power has been concentrated in the hands of a few. Dysfunctional political institutions (e.g., Comelec, Congress) must be reformed. The political culture needs to be reexamined in support of development. Democracy is at stake. We cannot afford to be indifferent.

Let us transform the present culture of deception and corruption to one that affirms truth, justice and good governance.

—RENE C. ROMERO
with 20 faculty members
and 50 students,
Philippine Normal University,
Taft Avenue, Manila

Do you support the moves to impeach the president?

YES. impeach ulit. Di tayo dapat MAGSAWA sa PAG-ALIS ng MASAMANG DAMO sa ating HARDIN DAHIL SAGABAL SILA sa PAG-USBONG ng ating pananim..
—Aloe, 30, *Baguio*

Yes, since we have 2 follow d rule of law
—Lourdes, 44, *mla.*

pipol want 2 know d truth thru d proper forum which is impeachment..
—Erick, 21, *candelaria, zamb*

No, not in favor coz we are tired n sick 2 all ranting officials hu have onli vested interests. Dey just used us small pipol..
—loida cajucom, 54, *parañaque*

i support impeachment moves because its what d law says, which we Pinoys ourselves made.
—Rodolfo De Lara, 46, *Bustos Bulacan*

i support d impeachment as its 1 way 2 remove d president. I only hope dat it wil b fair and credible. Dis isnt 2 much 2 ask or is it?
—jun, 37, *las piñas*

NO.It wil just b anOder financial burden 2 d government. An added expense to our "already bankrupt" econOmy. Why not prioritize d implementation of our (much needed) political & economic reforms?
—Niza ORIDA, 32, *DIGOS city*

milyong bses man nating palitan ang presdnte di na magbabago ang lagay ng bansa. tau ang nagluklok sa kanya kaya dapat lang na wag sya sisihin
—carmela dorde, 20, *guinobatan*

yes in calling a comelec official is immoral and she cannot say dat everybody is doing it! She shud be ashamed.
—merlita perin, 40, *davao city*

YES. Let d rule of law prevail. Barring any technicalities 2 obstruct d impeachment process, d truth shall set us free.
—Aida Estevez, 36, *Masbate City*

YES! d president shud b gven her day n (impeachment) court, its tym 4 her 2 respond 2 those allegations.
—DYRO LACHICA, 32, *San Jose, Occ. Mdo.*

No. Coz she is not duly elected president, simply pulling her down is better
—Oscar Dagupen, 32, *Baguio City*

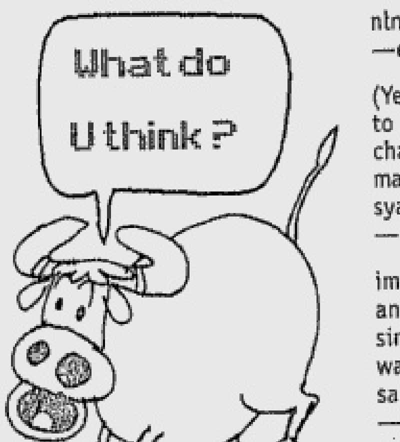
yes. dats d only way 2 find out d truth if she is d legitimate elected pres or not. Sana di maging circus ng magigiting sa kamara.
—rosine c. rivera, 61

Hindi! pero kung ito lamang ang paraan pra malaman ang totoo sa pangulo cge!
—jason mamawal, *Tarlac City*

no. Ganyan na lang ba lagi pag ayaw na impeach agad. Dey even giv pgma a chnce 2 explain. Marami kc me gus2 sa pwesto nya.
—divina macato, 22, *roxas city*

No
—Rudy Junsay, 70, *Davao City*

yes, a learning activity for a progressive philippines
—gloria navarrete, 47, *meyc bul*


What do U think?

Yes. It is hoped that the impeachment process will provide a fitting closure to the current political crisis
—Felix C. Reis, 48, *Baao, Camarines Sur*

yes, so they (oppositions) wil stop press conferences or appearing on Tv 2 air their grievances.
—Lynard marquez, 22, *Las piñas city*

No besyds gagamitin na naman ng iba jan pra gumanda image nla! insted dey shud help d poor edi ms my katuturan pa yun!
—eman lacuata, 20, *baguio*

no. give arroyo d chance at least she will be careful now. iF impeachment succeeds, a new corrupt president wil emerge..
—pepito capili, *davao city*

Yes, absolutely, at least to validate my suspicion if PGMA did or did not cheat
—Maricel, 28, *angeles city*

if pipOlpOwer, impeachmnt lang ung solusyon pra mapaalis ung pres. ayaw natin edi wag na tayOng magvOte magpipol power nlng tayo lang daya.
—edward ramos, 17, *manila*

(Yes) dapat lang! kaya naman gusto ni gloria ng chacha charter change ay dahil alam nya na malakas ang eBdnsya at matatalo sya kapag may impeachment
—bryan balolong, 23, *baguio*

impeach 4 wat reason? den put another president. crazy wer d sim, if our country lacks unity, wala tlga magandang mangyayari sa bansa natin
—chat, 22, *bacoor, cavite*

bakit hindi, kung sa ganung paraan lang natin malalaman ang tunay na katotohanan.
—josephine esguerra, 26, *bacoor, cavite*

NO! It will take years 2 impeach a legitimate president, but if we act as a nation we only need a day 2 OUST an illegitimate one
—dianne rosario, 18, *rizal*

HINDI! Kasi MAS MARAMING dapat pagtutunan NG pansin na PROBLEMA NG BAYAN kesa jan, mas IMPORTANT na Pagtuunan ang EKONOMIYA.
—Felicitas Tomas, 28, *Quezon City*

no, bcoz opposition leaders are just using impeachment in order to put our economy into a worst situation & blame others..
—avemar p. Grecia, 36, *dvo. ct*

Yes, if "people power" sims not 2 b efectiv, bcoz it is "uncOnstitutional", impeachment wud b a gud option 2 pave her way out of office
—Lionel, 19, *Baguio*

No, i dont support. we shud giv PGMA anOther chance. Besides she had done a lot 2 help d poor, aside from her ongoing plans.
—leah beltran, 20, *pampanga*

wala nang krapatan ang pangulo na mamuno käya dpat bumaba na cia sa pwesto pero sna last na impeachment na eto…
—jeffrey dumanjog, 19, *cotabato*

yes, bcoz der r so many speculations, name droppng, blaming pipol, findng scapegoats…our country had olridy suffered enuff
—Kevin Gus T. Torlao, 18, *Cagayan de Oro City*

No, bcoz 8 cannot help d country, i want d cha-cha bcoz 8 wl help change d present system of failed governance.
—rene artigo, 35, *maasin city*

yes, By ol means C shud b impeached! I blieve der is enuff evidence 2 impeach her. Lets pray we dont have a GMA LAPDOG congress
—Jenalyn Teatro, 29, *Mares*

PGMA must be impeached to clear herself of the scandalous election results in the 2004 election.
—Jose T Ferrer, 55, *Samp. Mla.*

i strongly support the moves to impeach the President.
—edward clint l. tuazon, 29, *malaybalay city*

Of cors, i rily suport d moves 2 impch d Pres. bcoz its d only AVENUE 2 change d govt & not d chacha! In dis way, Phils. wil b better!
—Ian Legaspi, 20, *gumaca*

i support d impeachment move vs GMA but d streets is stil d most dependable form 2 try GMA and 2 press 4 truth, justice & change.
—Gabriela, 23, *quezon city*

(No), di ako susuporta kc ayaw ko na bumalik nanaman sa umpisa ang ating bansa at masasayang mga proyekto ng pangulo pra sa bansa.. Wala nang patutunguhan ang ating bansa kung lagi na lang pinapatalsik ang pangulo ng bansa kaya HINDI ako susuporta.. :)
—jeffrey dumanjog, 19, *cotabato*

NO! Bcuz politicians wil again play d clowns 2a circus where we are d fools n losers. Or have it as platform 2force n launch EDSA4
—rene locsin, *QC*

YES
—Chiqui DELAFUENTE, 25, *dasma cavite*

no. Its futile. If ever Pres.Glo is out, are we sure dat d next wil make us satisfied? Its better 2 have parliamentary gOv. More heads are better dan 1.
—ryan sta. ana, 19, *rizal*

Yes! Bcoz her admission n d "hello garci tapes" put clouds on d integrity of our political exercise..
—Cesar L. Ventures, 42, *Calbayog City*

yes—2 remind her that no one is above d law. Even d President of dis country must b worthy of the people's trust.
—ed gonzaga, 50, *iloilo city*

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MADRASAH PUPILS
Children at an Islamic school in Matanog, Maguindanao are briefly disrupted by a photographer in their Arabic language lessons.
FN RILLO

300 Subic locators told to secure ECCs

By Blanche S. Rivera

AT LEAST 300 firms in the Subic Bay Freeport zone could get closure orders if they do not secure environmental compliance certificates from Department of Environment and Natural Resources soon.

The DENR, through its Environmental Management Bureau, has requested the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to submit the names of all locators in the freeport.

In a letter dated Aug. 5, Lormelyn E. Claudio, EMB regional director, asked the SBMA's ecology center to inform all the locators of the Court of Appeals ruling requiring all firms in the area to secure an ECC from the regional bureau.

"Recognizing the urgency of the matter, we are willing to extend assistance to your office to address these procedural requirements at the soonest possible time to avoid any administrative sanction that may be imposed on your locators," Claudio said.

Claudio said the DENR-EMB would issue notices of violations to firms that do not apply for an ECC immediately. The notice is usually the precedent of a cease-and-desist order.

"We have to issue NOVs (notices of violations), so we're now making an evaluation and reviewing previous applications filed in the central office," she said.

The ECCs are a prerequisite to the operation of all establishments in the country, but the SBMA and the DENR have had a jurisdictional dispute over the issuance of ECCs to locators in the freeport. The zone is managed by the SBMA, an autonomous authority.

With the CA decision that was deemed final and executory in March, the DENR was given the mandate to issue ECCs to locators in the Subic business enclave.

"They said they had no disagreement with the CA ruling, and that there really needs to be a one-stop shop in Subic," Claudio said, citing her latest discussion with SBMA ecology center chief Amethya Concepcion.

GMA defers Palawan transfer to W. Visayas

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has decided to defer the transfer of Palawan and Puerto Princesa City from Southern Tagalog's Region 4-B to Western Visayas.

Rafael Coscolluela, Western Visayas presidential adviser, said Dodi Limcauco, the President's appointments secretary, told him about Ms Arroyo's decision last Thursday.

The information was relayed to him, he said, because he earlier sent the President a note about the request of some Palawan officials for a consultation.

Coscolluela, however, said he did not know when the dialogue would take place.

But he said the Department of Interior and Local Government should submit an implementation plan on the transfer of Palawan and Puerto Princesa to Western Visayas to determine possible ramifications so these could be tackled in the consultation.

The DILG earlier announced that turnover rites would be held on Aug. 18 during the Regional Development Council meeting at Mambucal Resort in Murcia town, Negros Occidental.

The Palawan provincial board unanimously passed a resolution on July 26, "expressing vehement opposition" to Executive Order 429 issued by Ms Arroyo in May transferring Palawan and Puerto Princesa City to Western Visayas.

The board said Ms Arroyo "violated the constitutional right of Palaweños to public consultation ..." because the EO 429 was issued without consulting the officials and residents of the province.

It passed a separate resolution supporting House Bill No. 3328, authored by Oriental Mindoro Rep. Alfonso Umali Jr., that calls for the establishment of a "Southwestern Tagalog Region," including Palawan and its capital Puerto Princesa.

Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes said he had not signed the resolution yet, but it had become moot and academic now that the President decided to postpone the implementation of EO 429.

But he acknowledged that Ms Arroyo wanted to include Palawan in Western Visayas to make it part of a growth area.

Isulong ang kapakanan ng nakararami.

58* sa 63 Governors at 81* sa 86 Mayors ang sumusuporta kay Pangulong Arroyo.

Pagpapatunay na ang mga programang magpapaunlad sa bayan at sa kabuhayan ng mamamayan ang panawagan ng kasalukuyan.

Sa paniwalang ito, dalawa pang Governors at iilang Mayors ang sumama na rin. Malinaw na pagkilala ng ating mga lider sa umiigting na mga problema ng bayan.

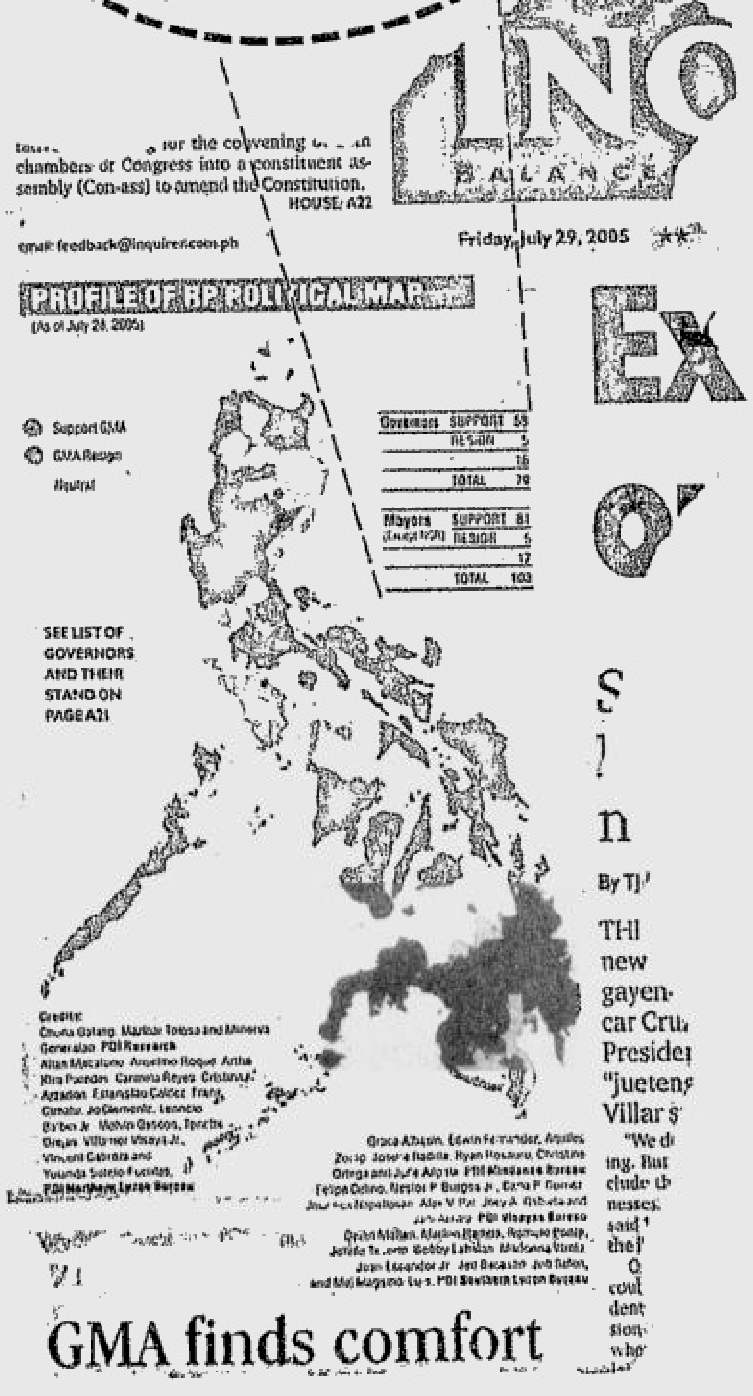
Ang pagsusulong ng reporma at pagpapalago ng ating kabuhayan ay ilan lamang sa mga pangunahing programang tinututukan ng ating mga punong bayan. Pagpapatibay ng kanilang pagtitiwala sa kakayahan ng kasalukuyang pamunuan.

Ang mga Gobernador at Mayor ang piling lider ng mga mamamayan. Direkta silang inihalal ng bayan. Sila ang boses ng kanilang mga nasasakupan.

Marapat lamang na sila'y ating pakinggan at tulungan.
Upang tuluyang umunlad ang bayan!

ULIRANG PILIPINO MOVEMENT

Governors	SUPPORT	58
	RESIGN	5
	NEUTRAL	16
	TOTAL	79
Mayors (Except NCR)	SUPPORT	81
	RESIGN	5
	NEUTRAL	17
	TOTAL	103



...for the convening of ... chambers of Congress into a constituent assembly (Con-ass) to amend the Constitution.
HOUSE: A22

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

INQ BALANCE
Friday, July 29, 2005

PROFILE OF RP POLITICAL MAP
(As of July 28, 2005)

Support GMA
GMA Resign
Neutral

SEE LIST OF GOVERNORS AND THEIR STAND ON PAGE A21

GMA finds comfort

* Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, July 29, 2005

Paid Advt.

Infant deaths blamed on use of milk formula

DAVAO CITY—More and more infants are dying every year because many mothers refuse to breastfeed their young for at least six months, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said.

Duque said breastfeeding ensured the survival and health of babies. But because a large number of mothers refuse or neglect breastfeeding, about 16,000 babies die every year.

Mother's milk is the only complete food for the child, Duque said. It contains colostrum, an antibody that fights life-threatening childhood diseases, such as pneumonia, diarrhea and measles.

Mothers who breastfeed their young are known to reduce the risk of contracting ovarian and breast cancer and even osteoporosis.

But Duque said the sad thing was that many mothers, especially those working, resorted to the use of infant milk formula.

"It's a waste of money," he said of commercial infant milk.

On the average, mothers who use infant formula milk for their children spend P2,000 a month, he said.

The health department estimates that some P3 billion worth of infant milk are being consumed each year.

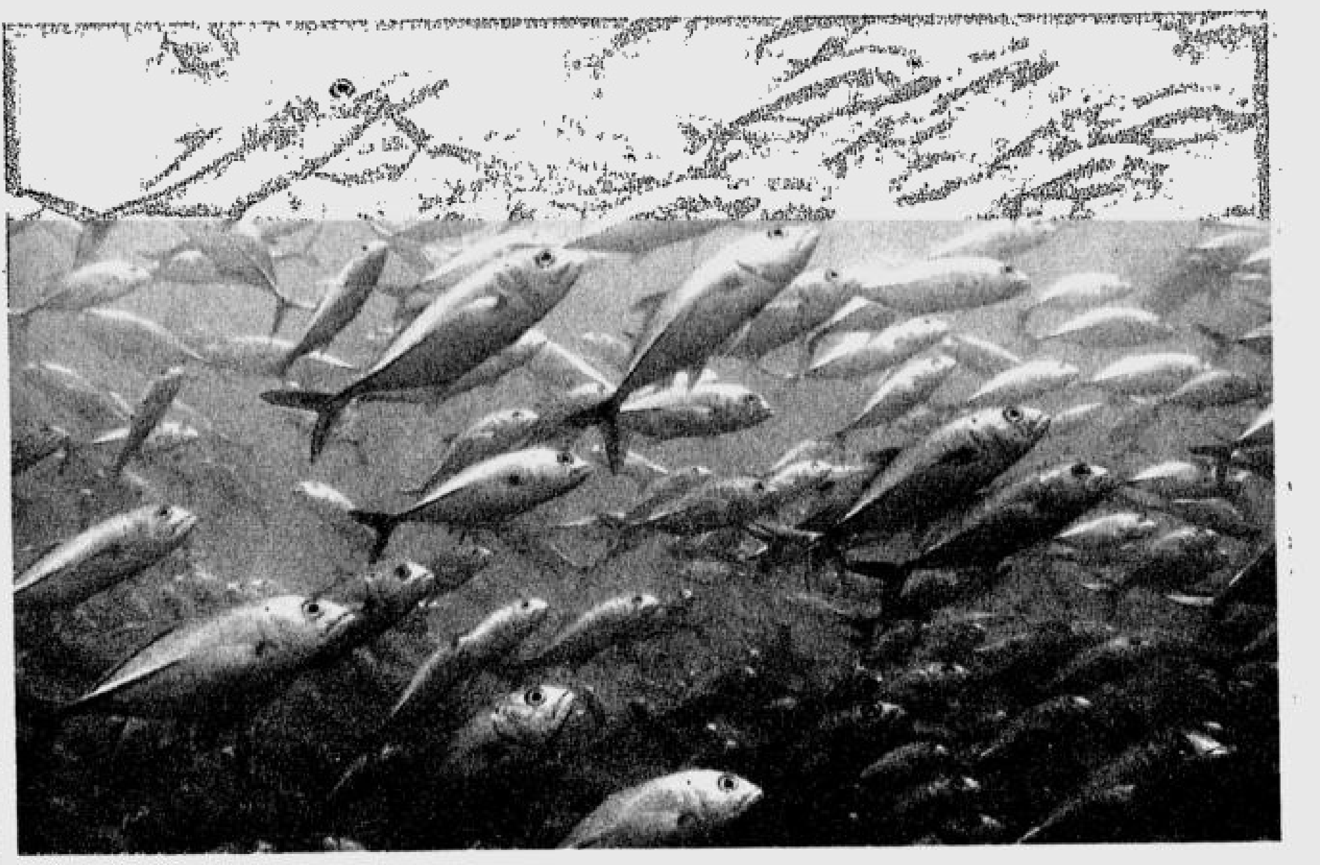
"It's a dilemma," Duque described how lactating mothers failed to analyze the economic and health benefit of breastfeeding.

"More and more poor women buy the infant formula milk," he said.

Dr. Howard Sobel, a representative of the World Health Organization, said the 16,000 infant deaths that occur yearly in the country could be traced to formula feeding.

He cited a study of the United Nations Children's Fund which showed that the risk of infant formula-fed babies dying from diarrhea was 25 times higher than that of breastfed babies.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau



SCHOOL CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A school of jacks (*talakitok*) swim in waters off the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan.

Governors, City and Municipal Mayors, Vice-Governors, Board Members, Vice-Mayors and Councilors nationwide ask the Senate and the House:

Amend Charter Now!

We—representing the network of local government units from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao—call on the Senate and the House of Representatives to set aside their personalist interests and devote their attention to the most urgent task of constitutional reform.

We support Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency and endorse the joint call of the President, former President Fidel V. Ramos, Speaker Jose de Venecia and the leaders of civil society including the religious groups, youth, academe and the business sectors for charter reform.

We call on 17 Senators to stop blocking a movement for political restructuring that the whole country needs badly and convene a Constituent Assembly now.

We urge both houses of Congress to complete their draft of the new Constitution within 60-90 days, so that the new Charter may be submitted to our people in a plebiscite for approval soonest.

We urge Congress to limit its proposed amendments to the following:

1. *Review the form and structure of government.*

We support the proposed shift from the *presidential* to a *unicameral parliamentary* form, and from the *unitary* to the *federal* structure.

Under the *parliamentary system*, the Executive and the Legislature will be united and act as one rather than in opposition. This change will end divided government and speed up public policymaking.

Unicameralism—or a one-house parliament instead of two houses of Congress—will make law-making a great deal simpler and more efficient—by doing away with the duplication of effort, the rivalries, the excessive expense, and the clashing ambitions that pervade every two-chamber legislature.

While *federalism* will ensure that the Center in Manila *becomes* the partner—and *no longer* the master—of local governments. It will give local communities greater control over their children's schools, their police forces, and their natural resources, and end the excessive dominance of "imperial Manila." It is said that Federalism is the antidote to separatism.

2. *Review protectionist provisions dating back to the Commonwealth period, which deter our country's economic development.*

These exclusionist policies—by choking the inflow of foreign capital, technology, and production skills—have made our country the *poorest* among *comparable* Asian economies. Protectionism has become outmoded in our age of interdependence. Opening the economy to foreign investments will create millions of jobs and mass housing; modernize our highways, airports, seaports, agriculture, tourism and industries; and raise our country's competitiveness in global markets.

3.*We also support proposals that will authorize public financing for qualified political parties, as embodied in the de Venecia-Angara bills to reduce political corruption; prohibit the perpetuation of political dynasties; and penalize party-switching or the turncoat "balimbing system".*

We need urgently to reduce the influence of 'money politics' and the intervention of drug and gambling lords; cut down the power of political oligarchies; strengthen our civil service and political party system; and hold elections every five years—and not once every two years including barangay elections—as in most parliamentary systems.

We also support a proposal to hold constitutional consultations to include barangay assemblies nationwide, so that citizens, civil society and the private sector under the aegis of the Citizens Constitutional Consultative Commission can help both houses of Congress finalize the new Charter.

Our decision on constitutional change *now* will shape our country's *future* and our children's *tomorrow*. This is why we need to think beyond our immediate personal interests—and decide beyond our partisan political loyalties—when we as a people decide on Charter Change.

The presidential system has repeatedly failed our people. Together let us save our country now—by adopting the successful parliamentary systems in Europe and Asia and the Federal systems of the U. S., India, Belgium, Germany, Malaysia, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, etc.

Gov. Erico Aumentado
President, League of Provinces and Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)

Mayor Ramon N. Guico
Acting President, ULAP, and President, League of Municipalities (LMP)

Mayor Jerry B. Trenas
President, League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP)

Vincent Piccio
National President, Provincial Board Members League of the Philippines

Carlo Pontico Fortuna
National President, Philippine Councilors League (PCL)

Elmer Datuin
National Chairman, (PCL)

Governor Ben Evardone
Spokesman, ULAP

Mayor Mel Sinen Sarmiento
Secretary General, LCP

Mayor Gerardo Calderon
Secretary General, League of Municipalities of the Philippines

Vice Mayor Jesus Cruz
National President, Vice Mayors League of the Philippines

Christopher Abcede
Executive Director, Vice Mayors League of the Philippines

Monina C. Camacho
Executive Director, ULAP

Maan Mananzan
Executive Director, Samahang Kabataan ng Filipinas

Coalition of Citizens for Charter Change Now!

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

ROUNDUP

Children's rights

CITY OF CALAPAN—The provincial government is focusing on the implementation of programs to protect four major rights of children—survival, development, protection and participation. During an orientation on the state of local children held recently at Atlantica Resort, Pinamalayan town, Teresita Umbao, provincial social welfare and development officer, said the provincial government was implementing supplemental feeding, immunization and deworming in promoting the survival of children.

Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Solid waste management

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Provincial Solid Waste Management Board held its first orientation meeting recently to tackle guidelines in formulating a 10-year Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan under Republic Act No. 9003 or the Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. Ma. Socorro Abu of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said each municipality should first have a 10-year solid waste management plan which would be the basis for the provincial plan.

Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cable TV protection

PARA MATIGIL NA KAYO!

CITY OF CALAPAN—An ordinance imposing penalties on persons who sabotage cable TV equipment in the province was recently filed with the provincial board. Ricbenson Marasigan, Oriental Mindoro Cable Association (Omca) president and program director of Tamaraw Vision Network, said the punishable offenses included illegal splitting, illegal tapping and illegal cutting of main cable transmission lines. The province has about 12,000 cable TV subscribers. Omca secretary Rommel Genilo said only Quezon and Cavite have passed ordinances for cable TV protection. A cable system bill is pending in Congress, he added.

Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Road rage: 1 dead

PAGBILAO, Quezon—A policeman shot dead a man after a heated argument over a minor vehicular accident on Wednesday. Police identified the victim as Renato Carandang, of Barangay Bagong Buhay, Gumaca town, and the suspect as SPO1 Domingo Pornela Jamilano, 51, of this town and member of the local police. Investigators said Jamilano's motorcycle collided with a Hyundai van bearing license plate No. CTN-362 and being driven by Carandang. While the two were having a heated argument, the suspect reportedly drew his .38 cal. revolver and shot the victim several times. Carandang was declared dead on arrival at the Jane County Hospital here. Jamilano surrendered to Senior Supt. Victorio Caragan, police provincial director.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mothers meet

PAGBILAO, Quezon—Some 500 mothers from several Mother's Club chapters formed by Mirant Pagbilao Corp. in the villages of Ibabang Polo, Ilayang Polo, Kanlurang Malicboy, Silangang Malicboy, Binahaan, Bantigue and Sipa in this town, and in Rizal and Tulay Buhangin in nearby Padre Burgos town held their 5th inter-Mother's Club annual meet at the Pagbilao covered court on Sunday. Venus Portes, wife of Pagbilao Mayor Romeo Portes, urged the participants to devote their time to the fulfillment of their important role in the family and community. The participants spent the day competing in different games and sports to promote camaraderie and solidarity.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

3 men found dead

LIGAO CITY—Three persons were found dead with bullet wounds in different parts of their bodies at about 7 a.m. last week at Barangay San Vicente here. Chief Insp. Arnel Rabe, Ligao police chief, identified the victims as Fernando Arciaga, 34, and a certain Casimiro Jr., 34, both married and of Daraga, Albay; and Dindo Lonsame, 35, of Binodegahan, Pioduran, Albay. Police have not yet identified the identities of the suspects.

Michael B. Jaucian, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

We have permit to cut trees, say Manila officials

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA school and government officials insisted yesterday they had a permit to cut, ball and prune trees in the controversial Arroceros Forest Park.

Ma. Luisa Quiñones, Division of City Schools superintendent, also claimed only dead trees were cut last week to prepare for the construction of a two-story teachers' building.

Quiñones cited in particular a century-old narra tree, which was nearly cut had not the media and environment advocates arrived on site last Thursday.

"That tree was specifically noted as decayed or dead by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) when it made an inventory of trees in the area," Quiñones told INQUIRER.

The other plants and trees, meanwhile, were found suitable for balling and would be transferred to another place, she added.

'No violations'

"The workers there would not violate the rules, particularly that of the DENR, which inspected the area before giving us the permit. We went through the process. How come they question that?" Quiñones said.

Environmentalists expressed dismay that workers had started cutting trees on the site. They said the city government should stop any activity in the park since a case was still pending in court.

The group had questioned the Certificate of Non-Coverage (CNC) issued by the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), saying the area had already been declared an archaeological site.

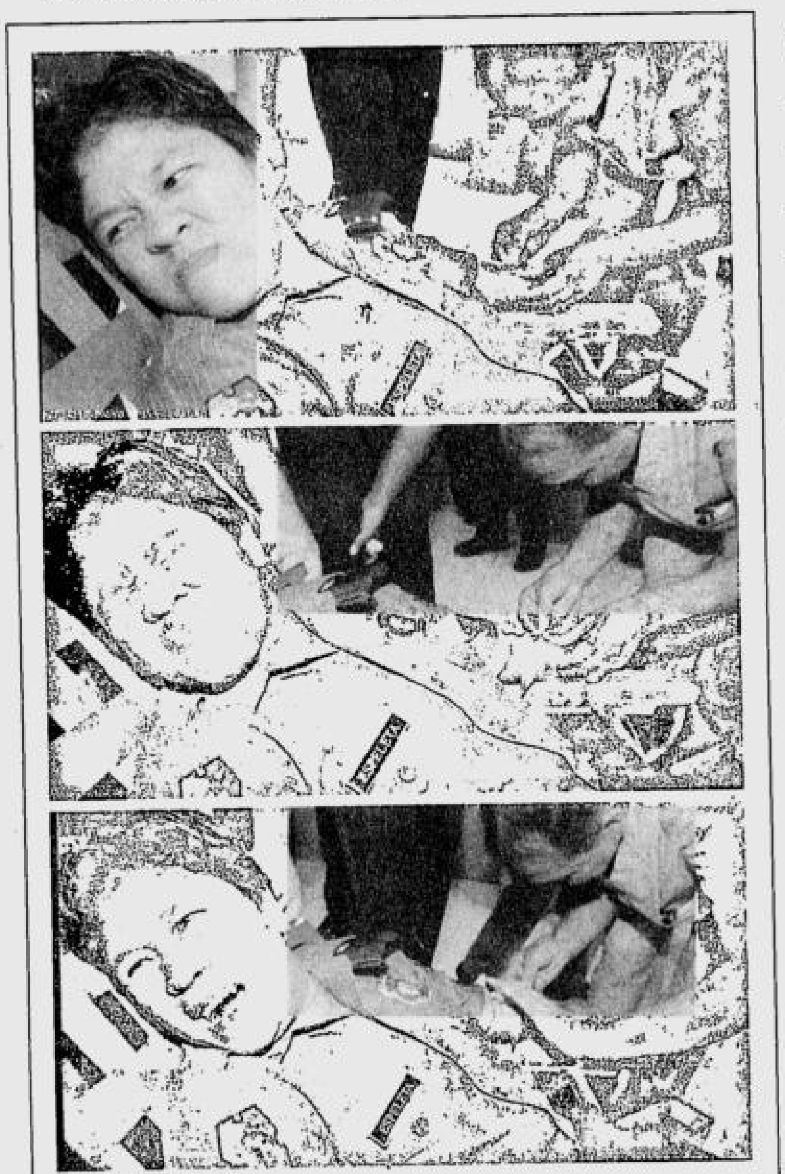
But Quiñones stressed that they were given a CNC instead of an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) because the area used to be an office compound, and not a forest park. The disputed property was the old site of the Department of Education (DepEd). She added that the government project would cover less than 10 percent of the 2.1-hectare property.

Blocked

But Regina Paterno, president of Winner Foundation, caretakers of the park, said they were dismayed that the city government "locked the gate and blocked the back entrance to the park beside the Pasig River."

She added that they had to use a ladder at the front gate to enter the forest park last Sunday when they held a Mass on the premises for the late Sen. Raul Roco.

"This is supposed to be a public area," Paterno said, adding that disabled people, in particular, would have a hard time getting inside the park.



EASY DOES IT

PO1 Judy Espeleta makes a face as a nurse tries to find a vein during a blood letting drive of the Manila Health Department at the Western Police District Headquarters in Manila. It was Espeleta's first try as a blood donor. REM ZAMORA

Grenade hits Escolta pizza parlor; grudge angle eyed

By Tina G. Santos

TENSION gripped a busy area in Escolta, Manila Sunday night after a grenade exploded in front of a pizza parlor.

Investigation showed that the incident happened around 8:45 p.m. in front of the Domino's Pizza branch in Escolta.

No one was hurt, but a delivery motorcycle parked in front was partly damaged and the glass window of the adjacent Armiview Beauty Parlor shattered, said SP04 Francisco Gasingan.

Bystanders told investigators that a man clad in green shirt, whom they saw roaming the area before the incident, hurled the grenade in the direction of the pizza food chain. They added that the man immediately fled on foot and headed toward the Port Area.

Police recovered what appeared to be a safety·lever that was part of the MK9 fragmentation grenade used by the unidentified suspect.

Western Police District investigators said they are looking into the possible involvement in the incident of a former employee of Domino's

The suspect was reportedly fired from his job after he figured in a fight with a coworker last month. Furious, the suspect apparently threatened to get back at his opponent, police said.

Aubrey's dad charged

THE FATHER of sexy star Aubrey Miles (Aubrey Sandel in real life) was charged yesterday with physical injuries in the office of the Caloocan City Prosecutor.

Victorino Sandel, 49, of 110 Rosa St., Marcela Baranggay 23, Caloocan City, allegedly threw flower pots at a 14-year-old girl and assaulted responding barangay officials.

He was charged with child abuse and direct assault. An P80,000 bail for violation of Republic Act 7610 and P12,000 each for two counts of direct assault were recommended by the assistant city prosecutor for Sandel.

The victim's father and two barangay officials, Manuel Rodriguez and Nelson Hermoso, said Sandel and a fish vendor were arguing near Sandel's house supposedly over unpaid debts last Sunday.

The suspect reportedly suddenly went berserk and started assaulting people, including responding barangay officials, police said. The victim's father said his daughter sustained cuts and bruises on her left arm. He added that he filed a separate complaint against the suspect for beating him up. Sandel said he would file counter charges. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Police suggest ethics classes to fight cybersex

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
and Margaux C. Ortiz

POLICE officials are asking schools to introduce cyberethics in computer classes to combat cybersex.

The other day, Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago raised the issue of cybersex, citing a website where over 200,000 Filipinos registered looking for sex partners. This is the second biggest number from an Asian country, the lawmaker said.

Since the law had not yet caught up with technology, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) Anti Transnational Crime Division head, Supt. Gilbert Sosa said students should be taught how to use the Internet properly.

But authorities realize there is no guarantee students will be dissuaded from patronizing cybersex sites that have become profitable businesses.

Meanwhile, the National Bureau of Investigation's Anti Fraud and Computer Crimes Division chief Elfren Meneses Jr. said poverty and the lack of laws governing cyberspace led to an increase in the number of Filipinos engaged in cybersex.

Meneses confirmed reports that some 200,000 Filipinos were lured into cybersex by the huge amount of money involved in the trade.

Too many fiestas make for low tax collection

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

NEWLY APPOINTED Customs Commissioner Alexander Arevalo complains that because of the many declared holidays, the Bureau of Customs might not be able to meet its collection target this year.

That's a valid complaint. The customs bureau loses an estimated P600 million during a holiday that falls on a weekday.

This year, there have been numerous weekdays that were declared by the national government as holidays because the days they were supposed to be observed were on weekends.

For example, Independence Day, June 12, this year fell on a Sunday. So, Monday, June 13, became a holiday.

Why? For the simple reason that June 12 is always a holiday, and since it fell on Sunday, a non-working day, the first day after the weekend should be declared a holiday. Stupid reason, isn't it?

Only lazy employees rejoiced over it since there was no deduction in their paycheck. And more important—to them—they enjoyed an extra day of rest.

What these employees didn't realize is that holidays retard the country's economic progress.

One reason many foreign investors have transferred their factories or offices elsewhere was the many holidays in this country. To top it all, their employees or workers were paid for those non-working days.

No wonder the Philippines is not getting anywhere economically because of the work ethic of its people. We celebrate holidays at the drop of a pin.

Fiestas are declared holidays in places where they are celebrated. People dance, drink and forget about their work during feasts of their patron saints. Then, the following day, they skip work and if they work they become inefficient because of a hangover.

We just have too many fiestas.

In other Asian countries more progressive than us, their observance of holidays is minimal. South Korea, for example, rose from the ashes of the civil war in the 1950s because its people went to work even during its day of worship.

The economy of the country depends on the business of its people. Business earns money, part of which goes to the government in the form of taxes.

In these hard times, the government can't afford to lose much-needed revenues. It should forego fiestas and holidays that make business stand still.

* * *

Speaking of collections at the customs bureau, Commissioner Arevalo should watch the shipments of Dalniezen Brokerage Inc. whose cargoes arrive at the Port of Manila and Manila International Container Port.

Customs insiders say Dalniezen carries highly dutiable goods sold at a big department store in Makati.

The brokerage firm, my sources say, pays only a minimal amount of taxes and duties through undervaluation or misdeclaration of its cargo.

The firm connives with some officials and employees at the POM Section 4 at the Port of Manila, the sources said.

But its No. 1 protector is allegedly a customs official who was recently promoted to a very sensitive post in the bureau.

The customs official and the owner of the brokerage firm have been very close friends since the official was still with the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS), my spies say.

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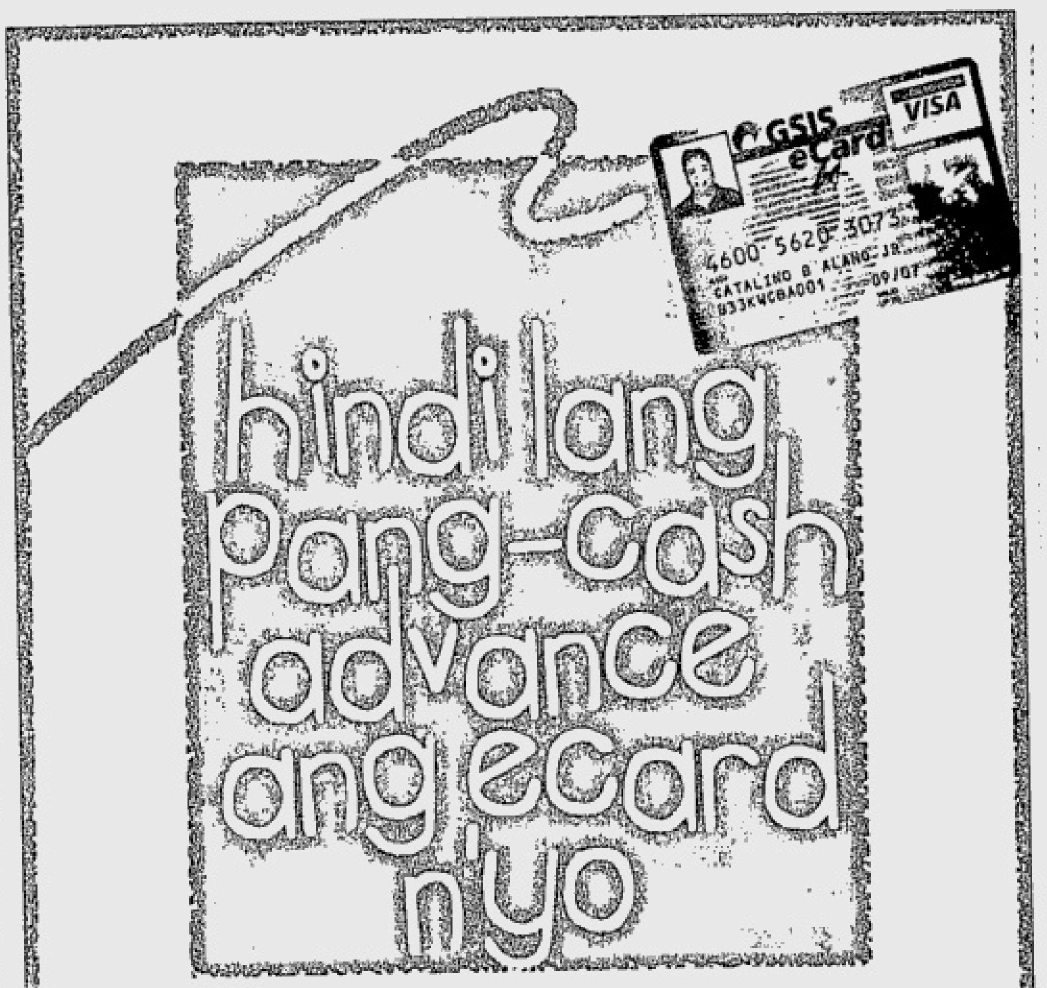
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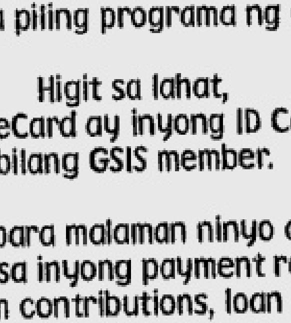
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NBI bares lottery scam via text

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday warned the public to watch out for text messages promising millions in lottery winnings with the arrest of four suspected syndicate members.

NBI agents, in coordination with the Anti-Money Laundering Council and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, arrested suspects Jeremias Clamor Jr., Sharwin Reyes, Manny Carlo Yu, and Veronica Reyes last Friday in Davao City.

Their victims, most of them overseas workers, were made to believe that they had won in the lottery.

Alleged syndicate members Geoffrey Raymond Uy, Joseph Calunsag, Ramon Uy and an alias Juanita Camacho remain at large, according to NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division (AFCCD) chief Elfren Meneses Jr.

Meneses said the AMLC received a complaint from Singapore-based victim Maria Ginah Bajana last July 12 regarding fraudulent text messages she received from Camacho.

Camacho had informed Bajana of her alleged lottery winnings in Manila and asked her to send money to a certain Felipe Teves Suarez as processing fee.

The victim remitted a total of P79,214.30 to the Philippines on three separate occasions through a Western Union Money Transfer outlet in Davao City.

The NBI later found out that Clamor had used a fictitious name (Felipe Suarez) to make frequent transactions with Western Union. Bajana again received a text message from Camacho in late July, directing her to send P44,800 to Clamor.

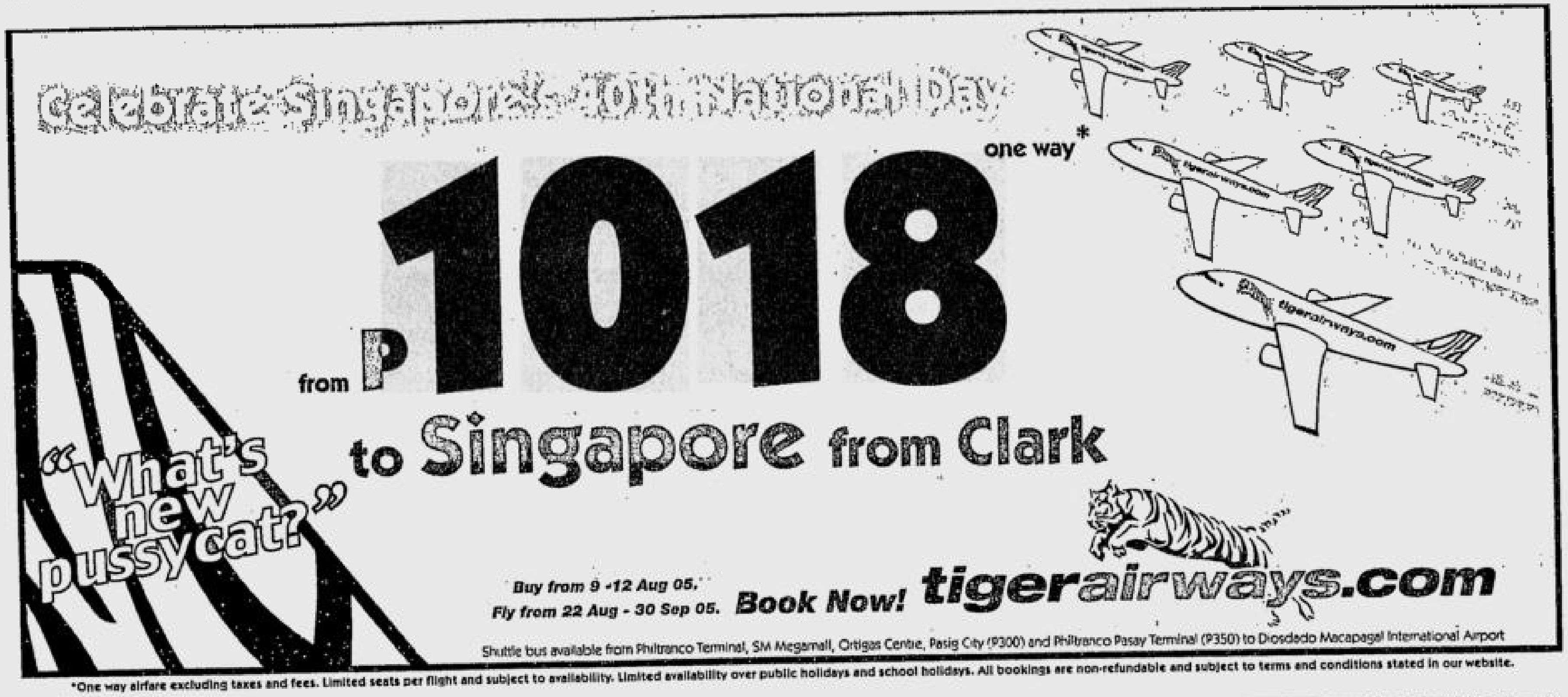
Meneses said operatives of the AMLC and NBI-AFCCD went to Davao last Aug. 4 to monitor the text messages between the complainant and Clamor.

The operatives arrested Clamor and suspect Reyes the following day while the suspects were withdrawing the money, Meneses added.

Several identification cards, prepaid SIM cards, and deposit slips were seized by the agents from the suspects.

From a recovered document, the NBI found out that Yu had also claimed $170 from a certain Joni Mauro Aguilar based in Greece last August 4.

Meneses said several people from different parts of the country, including Metro Manila, had lost hundreds of thousands of pesos to the group.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METROBRIEFS

Paolo in car accident

CONTIS

ACTOR Paolo Contis was slightly hurt in a road accident early yesterday along Elliptical Road, Quezon City after a three-way collision involving his sports utility vehicle, a car and a passenger jeepney. Contis, 20, was driving his Ford Expedition at 6:20 a.m. when it hit the rear left portion of a jeepney driven by Ronnie Momo, 36, between North and Quezon Avenues. The jeepney slammed into the rear left portion of a Nissan Altima, with Ronnie Panotes, 27, at the wheel. Contis' SUV then also hit the left side of Panotes' car, investigators said. The actor, however, told police the jeepney hit him first. He complained of pain on several parts of his body, and was advised to seek medical treatment. No one else was hurt in the incident. *DJ Yap*

River mishap victim's wife has not lost hope

HER MIND believes her husband is already dead, his body hidden beneath the murky waters of the Marikina River. But in her heart, Fely de Vera believes that her husband Elpidio could still be alive. Elpidio was on his way home on Saturday evening when his FX Taxi was trapped on the narrow Tumana Bridge in Marikina City. Heavy rains had flooded the bridge, and also caused the river to swell. Elpidio's vehicle was found the next day in the middle of the river, a hundred meters away from the bridge. But the driver was nowhere in sight.The Marikina City Rescue Unit had sent out search workers in rubber boats to look for the missing driver. The office is also coordinating with the Philippine Coast Guard for the possible deployment of divers to help in the search. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

PNP help sought on stolen manhole covers

THE ADVENT of the rainy season brings with it potential problems like open manholes, broken bridge railings and absent street signs for both motorists and commuters. For this reason, policemen in Metro Manila were recently ordered to intensify their campaign against thieves of manhole and drainage covers, bridge railings and street signs. The directive from the National Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO) Chief Director Vidal Querol stemmed from a letter sent to the agency by the regional head of the Department of Public Works and Highways. DPWH-NCR Regional Head Robert Lala sought the assistance of the NCRPO chief director for the immediate arrest of suspects involved in the theft of road paraphernalia. The NCRPO had recently noted an increase in the incidence of cases involving the theft of these items, with reports of open manholes and stolen street signs. Pedestrians, especially schoolchildren, run the risk of falling into open manholes which are either filled with waste or water. According to a police officer assigned to the theft and robbery section, manhole covers and street signs were easily sold at junk shops where they commanded a good price. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

EEK! NAHULOG YUNG MAMA!
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Mandaluyong barangays get new computers

MANDALUYONG City Mayor Neptali M. Gonzales II has provided 10 additional computers to the city's manpower development training center as part of the city's effort to improve its technical training services for students taking up computer short courses. The computers were distributed to Barangays Hulo and Welfareville, where the manpower development centers are located. Joey Reyes, chief of the city's manpower development division said the new computers would benefit more than 100 students who are currently enrolled in computer courses in the city's manpower development training centers. "Many will benefit from these new computers because our students are not only employees of city hall but also out-of-school youths and parents who want to enhance their computer skills or simply want to learn how to use a computer," Reyes said. The city's manpower development training centers are offering keyboarding and information technology courses which take two to four months to complete. Classes are held from Mondays to Fridays, and start from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mayor Gonzales has allocated some P10 million for the operation costs and for the upgrading of equipment and facilities needed by the centers. Apart from computer courses, the centers also offer courses on automotive skills, carpentry, cosmetology, dress making and voice training.

OLGMS Golden Jubilee

FR. ROLANDO Agustin, Rector of Our Lady of Guadalupe Minor Seminary (OLGMS) on Edsa, Makati City, is calling on all OLGMS alumni (graduates and non-graduates), former teachers and seminary personnel to participate in its 50th Anniversary and Grand Homecoming on Aug. 21-22. According to Fr. Agustin, a member of the Silver Jubilee Class of 1980, the theme for the Golden Jubilee is: "A Heart that Prays… A Heart that Serves." The celebration coincides with this year's Feast of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For more details, interested participants are advised to contact Joy or Helen at 895-8964 or 895-8965.

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Compiled by L. Manguiat

TENNIS: ATP Masters Montreal; 9 a.m. (r-1 p.m. and 9 p.m.); STAR Sports—Check out round one from Canada.

BASKETBALL: NBA Rocky Mountain Revue-Mavs vs Jazz; 8 a.m. (r-11 p.m.); Solar Sports—Dallas and Utah clash in this off-season duel.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Stop pleading with me, Peping tells Lina

COJUANGCO: Lina should address his appeal to the 33 GA members.

By Musong R. Castillo

THE WOUND just got deeper.

Instead of a favorable reaction, the president of the expelled Basketball Association of the Philippines drew a stinging rebuke from Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco for continued defiance of the BAP's expulsion.

Cojuangco was outraged after a press release quoted BAP president Joey Lina as saying he will write Cojuangco to seek a "temporary truce" to enable the country to defend its basketball title in the Southeast Asian Games here this November.

The BAP story said it had also forged an agreement with Michel Lhuillier, making the Cebu businessman the new financier of the national team that will be formed for the SEAG. Lhuillier was earlier named the association's vice president for the Visayas.

"He (Cojuangco) did not expect that a statement like that could come from a friend (Lina)," said Cojuangco spokesman Joey Romasanta over the phone. Cojuangco and Lina are cofounders of the political party PDP-Laban.

"He (Cojuangco) really reacted because the story got his ire."

By a unanimous vote by the POC general assembly, the BAP was expelled by the POC last June 30 for "reneging" on basic agreements forged in two cage summits last April.

In a strongly worded statement, Cojuangco said that the BAP can appeal its case with the members of the POC general assembly—and not to him—as the expulsion of the BAP was not his sole decision in the first place.

"I wish he (Lina) would stop appealing to me because I am not the POC," Cojuangco said. "He should address his appeal to the 33 members of the general assembly, not counting the three who were out of the country (when the BAP was first suspended) and another that abstained when the BAP was ousted."

Lina supposedly got a copy of Cojuangco's reaction and told Romasanta he was quoted out of context in the BAP release.

"But how can that be, when it is the BAP's own publicity arm which came up with that (press) release?" said Romasanta.

A new group called the Philippine Basketball Federation, with former BAP secretary-general Moying Martelino as president, is now in the process of seeking the recognition of the international basketball federation (Fiba).

Martelino came back from Hong Kong two days ago, where he, together with Romasanta and POC special assistant Go Teng Kok, presented the PBF's official application for membership to Fiba president Carl Ching Menky.

As a result of the BAP expulsion, the Fiba suspended the country from competing in international competitions pending the result of its own probe on the POC-BAP row.

Knights keep streak, turn back game Altas

PERPETUAL Help's Josef Racho (left) fouls Letran's Aaron Aban as they battle for possession in yesterday's game. RYAN LIM

By Jasmine W. Payo

BOYET Bautista and JP Alcaraz presided over a strong Letran finish as the Knights squeaked past the University of Perpetual Help Altas, 59-51, yesterday for their ninth straight win in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Bautista and Alcaraz combined for eight points as the Knights charged to a 58-49 lead, with 18.3 seconds left, from a precarious 50-49 advantage.

"We were able to execute down the wire," said Letran coach Louie Alas.

Aaron Aban and Bautista finished with 14 points apiece, while Alcaraz drilled in seven of his 10 points in the final quarter.

Although the remarkable streak assured the Knights of a Final Four seat, Alas stressed that he still has to make some key changes to keep the winning run going.

"We still have to develop a killer instinct, so we welcome close games to improve the capability of the team to perform under pressure," he said.

Jose Rizal U proved Alas' point as the cellar-dwelling Bombers stunned the Mapua Cardinals, 51-43.

"The players are starting to believe that they can win," said coach Cris Calilan after the Bombers improved their record to 2-7.

Armando Maniego played consistently all game, finishing with 14 points on top of four rebounds, four assists and four steals.

Senior guard Jenciano Domancas also stepped up for the Bombers, shooting seven of his 13 points in the final quarter.

The Cardinals absorbed their second straight loss for a 5-4 card, while the Altas slipped to 3-6 along with the San Beda Lions and the St. Benilde Blazers.

The Knights held a 48-40 buffer before Vladymir Joe and Khiel Misa fueled a rally that pulled the Altas within a point, 50-49, with 2:53 remaining.

But the Knights picked up the pace and took advantage of the Altas' turnovers in the closing minutes to seal the win.

In junior play, the Squires overpowered the Altalettes, 92-32, for a 7-1 record. Freshman center Darell Green led with 25 points and nine rebounds.

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
11:30 a.m.—Jose Rizal U vs PCU (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Jose Rizal U vs PCU (Srs)
4 p.m.—St. Benilde vs Mapua (Srs)

The scores:

First Game (Srs)

LETRAN 59—Aban 14, Bautista 14, Alcaraz 10, Aldave 8, Rodriguez 7, Andaya 6, Mondragon 0, Quinday 0, Realista 0, Piñera 0, Balneg 0.

PERPETUAL 51—Misa 16, Refuerzo 12, Joe 11, Balboa 6, Apor 4, Bauzon 2, Manuel 0, Racho 0, Mendoza 0.

Quarters: 15-7, 29-21, 42-31, 59-51

Second Game (Srs)

JRU 51—Mañiego 14, Domancas 13, Dedicatoria 12, Natividad 7, Fenequito 5, Magtahao 0, Reyes 0, San Luis 0, Yuzon 0, Nicolas 0, Jorge 0.

MAPUA 43—Pascual 12, Dela Peña 7, Gorospe 6, Del Rosario 5, Gonzales 5, Tiongco 3, Co 2, Veranga 2, Malgapo 1, Sumalinog 0, Salud 0, Migraso 0.

Quarters: 13-12, 25-23, 34-33, 51-43

Bo Perasol takes over as new FedEx head coach

By June Navarro

HE vowed success where others have failed.

Dolreich "Bo" Perasol officially took the FedEx Express' coaching reins yesterday, becoming the club's fifth bench tactician since the team joined the Philippine Basketball Association in 2002.

Perasol said he has no problem adhering to the team's philosophy of using a 12-man rotation every game—a requirement the four other mentors before him found just too forbidding.

"That's the only way to do it," said the 34-year-old Perasol. "To accomplish things in the team, you should totally embrace the philosophy of management, win or lose."

A former skipper of the UP Fighting Maroons in the early '90s, Perasol was elevated to the Express' head coaching post nearly a month after Bong Ramos stepped down.

Ramos has since moved to Talk 'N Text as assistant to coach Joel Banal.

Before Perasol and Ramos came a line of coaches who tried but failed to find success under the FedEx's established system of maximizing its manpower.

Coach Derek Pumaren was absorbed from Tanduay during the maiden season of the Express before Boni Garcia and Joe Lipa took turns handling the Bert Lina-owned ballclub.

"Other coaches combined their system with the team's philosophy," said Perasol.

Perasol, who hails from General Santos City, also doubles as manager of the company's operations in Southern Tagalog. He sat as assistant to Garcia during the Metropolitan Basketball Association days of the Express.

"This job is also my responsibility as an employee," said Perasol, who will have Robert Sison and Allan Gregorio as his deputies.

Crack wingmen, guards prime pro draft choices

WASHINGTON

SALVADOR

BUGIA

By June Navarro
and Dennis U. Eroa,
Inquirer Libre sports editor

NO LEGITIMATE center is on the 53-man roster, but there's a slew of crack wingmen and a solid cast of guards hoping to make it to the Philippine Basketball Association through the annual Rookie Draft set this Sunday at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta, Rizal.

The 6-foot-7 Anthony Washington is expected to be picked by the FedEx Express as the No. 1 draft choice, with Paolo Bugia (6-5) and Jon Dan Salvador (6-4-1/2) completing the other prime selections at forwards.

Salvador, the 2005 PBL Open Most Valuable Player, was picked by national coach Chot Reyes along with Dennis Miranda as last-minute reinforcements for the national team of PBA stars that placed third in the last Jones Cup in Taipei.

Bugia, a former Ateneo standout, also impressed Reyes during the two-day rookie camp last weekend with his agility and shooting touch from the perimeter.

"I'm sure Paolo will be a solid pick in the second round. At 6-5, Paolo can play the three position. He can be a wingman and, as he becomes stronger, he can play the inside," said Reyes, who conducted the rookie camp along with noted mentor Norman Black.

Only 18 players will be drafted, with the league reducing the selection to only two rounds. The players who will be bypassed automatically become free agents.

Armed with the second overall pick, Sta. Lucia Realty is set to select Alex Cabagnot, a 6-foot-1 playmaker from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, while third overall Coca-Cola is inclined to snag Far

CRACK/A19

Luck rides with Mark Bumgarner at Ekart

STA. ROSA, Laguna—Mark Bumgarner of M&M Racing emerged the last man standing in the ICA Open class yesterday following an unexpected twist in the fifth leg of the 2005 Shell Helix Superkarting Series at the Ekart Track of the Enchanted Kingdom here.

Bumgarner was the lone survivor of the centerpiece event after a collision took out Asian karting queen Michele Bumgarner and Birel driver Indy Villalon in the third lap, and Karter of the Year Matteo Guidicelli got derailed by mechanical trouble in the 14th.

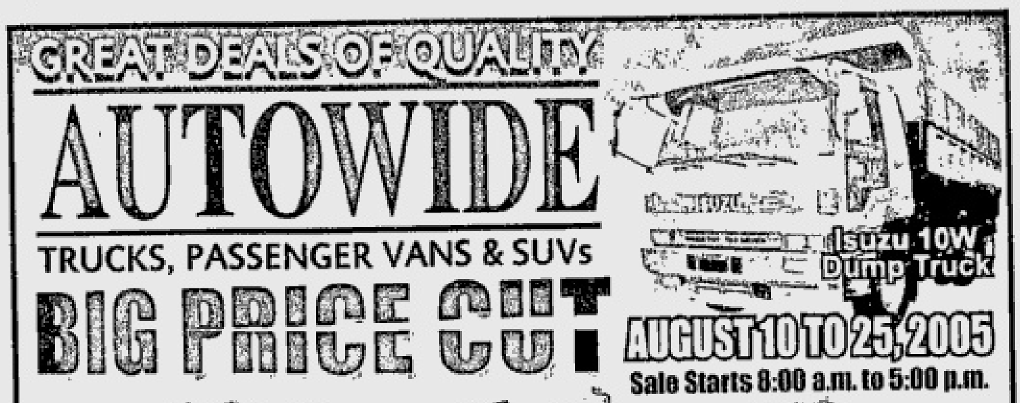
Michele lost control of her kart on the slippery wet track and collided with Villalon, leaving Guidicelli and Mark to vie for the title in this event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Honda Phils., Denso Iridium Power, Bridgestone by Phil. Allied Ent. Corp., DMCI Homes, Eastway Motorcycle Racing, Khaos, Aeromed and Aviva Insurance.

But Guidicelli likewise bowed out when his chains gave way in the 14th lap, leaving the younger Bumgarner to complete the entire 28 laps all alone.

"Luck was on my side. After Michele was forced out of the race, I just did what I have to do and tried to give Matteo a good fight," said Mark Bumgarner, who finished the race in 15 minutes 55.151 seconds.

The crowd was earlier treated to an impressive show of skills by

LUCK/A19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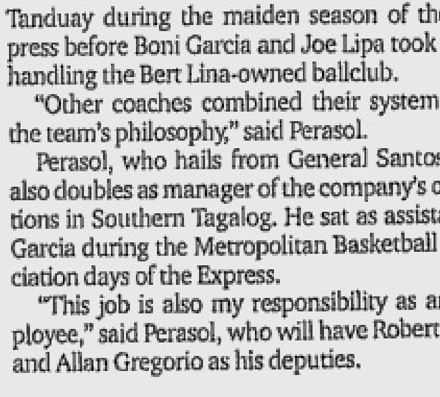

INQBOX

Question of the Week

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Provincial winners can text:
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Inquirer
menu

Valencia five nips Laguna Spring

VALENCIA CITY—Valencia Golden Harvest took advantage of Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna's depleted roster to hack out a come-from-behind 89-85 victory Sunday in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the packed city gym here.

The Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro led for the most part of the game, but they succumbed to Golden Harvest's perimeter shooting in the homestretch.

Mayor Jose Galario Jr.'s Valencia cagers fired 11 triples, including four by 6-foot-7 rookie Nat Cruz, to improve their record to 6-5.

Spring (5-5) led 70-66 going into the payoff period, but Jimmy Taligatos strung up six points and Cruz sank two triples to fuel a 16-3 run that shoved Valencia in front, 82-73, with 3:31 left.

Spring fielded only nine players. Dondon Villamin, Mel Latoreno, Val Domingo and Marlon Kalaw joined the PBA Rookie Camp while Robin Mendoza and MC Caceres were both injured.

In the other game at the San Dionisio gym in Parañaque City, Hapee/Dewfoam-backed Mantawi ripped Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana's Parañaque Jets, 104-90, to improve to 6-4.

Action resumes today with the Baguio Lions, backed by SMB Tours/Viacom Cable, facing Bacchus/Harbour Centre-Manila at the San Juan Gym and Laguna Spring taking on Iligan at the MSU IIT gym in Iligan City.

The scores:

VALENCIA 89—Cruz 20, Cabili 18, Navales 13, Taligatos 8, Nailou 7, Gragasin 7, Adams 6, Celiz 3, Casar 2, Clavel 0, Madera 0, Bayron 0, Bagares 0, Toring 0.

LAGUNA 85—Reyes 17, Proceso 14, Manucat 14, Nuqui 11, Mallari 10, Corbin 8, Manuel 7, Nolasco 2, Roda 2.

Quarters: 18-19, 42-45, 66-70, 89-85

MANTAWI 104—Larong 21, Gloria 17, Alminario 14, Tundag 11, Moreno 9, Limbo 7, Santos 6, Carretas 5, Huelar 4, Sereno 2, Bajanting 2, France 0.

PARAÑAQUE 90—Basilides 17, Lopez 16, Rodriguez 15, Marquez 10, Saquilayan 9, Tolentino 7, Bognot 6, Yambao 3, Ruiz 3, Balingit 2, Guiyab 2, Yllana 0, Ollano.

Quarters: 27-15, 55-41, 86-68, 104-90

TEAM CHAMP: Dave Sobrepeña, Alberto Fernandez, Jaime Fernandez, Freddie Stelton, Ramon Tapales (third to seventh from left) with INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto (left), John Maxwell and PDI president, Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (right).

Fernandez tops Inqpulse-Maxwell golf

FIRST Beneficial Life EVP Jaime Fernandez scored a net 69 under the System 36 format to win The Inqpulse Invitational Golf Tournament with Dr. John Maxwell at the Sta. Elena Golf Club recently.

In a rare gathering of CEOs and VIPs, Fernandez played a solid game that also gave him a share of the team championship with businessman Freddie Stelton, CBN Asia's Ramon Tapales and PhilamLife's Alberto Fernandez.

BMW's Jeorg Breuer and Maxwell's bosom buddy Dave Sobrepeña came in second and third, respectively.

Thirty top executives from various companies joined the 18-hole event.

Dr. Maxwell was joined by the PDI valued partners including Rustan's Rico Tantoco, Federal Land's Alfred Ty, Asia Brewery's Michael Tan, Mitsubishi Motor's Yoshiaki Ichimura and Melchor Dizon, Toyota's Danny Isla, Nissan's Valentino de Leon, Smart Communications' Boy Martirez and Julie Carceller, Security Bank's Alberto Villarosa and Rafael Simpao, URC's Bienvenido Bautista, Robinsons Land's Danilo Ignacio, Jaguar's William Soong, Digitel Mobile's Rafael Catedral and Richard Marcelo, Cebu Pacific's Charlie Manio and Far East Media's Luis Nuñez.

INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto and guest of honor Dr. Maxwell led the ceremonial tee-off. Dr. Maxwell later talked on team leadership and execution during the closing ceremony where INQUIRER president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez welcomed the participants.

The players received a personalized bottle of wine from sponsor Johnnie Walker, while Hewlett Packard Phils. raffled off a 5.1 megapixel-digital camera.

Farewells

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

RAUL Roco, concededly the best candidate to lose in the last two presidential elections of 1998 and 2004, did not only love literature, particularly poetry (Ithaca was the poem of his life). He also loved music, which he exhibited with gusto during a dinner party hosted by Tita Eggie Apostol, the founding chair of the INQUIRER, for select friends. That was nearly 10 years ago, but I could still vividly remember.

While Conrad de Quiros and I were doing Beatle songs in a corner of the house, with Conrad doing the guitar-plucking ("Blackbird" and "Mother Nature's Son" are his favorites), Raul Roco was by the piano belting out Cole Porter songs one after the other. Each song he did drew warm applause from an appreciative audience that included Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Tina Monzon-Palma, Billy Lacaba, Marra Pl. Lanot, Pete Lacaba and Sol Juvida, among others.

When it was time for dancing, ballroom-dancing style, Raul Roco also did not disappoint. Upon the prodding of Tita Eggie, a great dancer herself, Raul did boogie, waltz and cha-cha with his wife, Sonia.

That was a night to remember—good food and vintage wine to boot.

We said our farewells in the small hours of the morning, rich in memories.

Before parting, I told Billy Lacaba, then one of Raul Roco's chief allies: "Please do your best in ensuring his victory."

I'm sure Billy did. Only, that Raul Roco was not Palace-bound. Never.

Still, one need not be in Malacañang to show genuine concern for the people, as did Raul Roco.

The political gods might have looked unkindly at him, but the lives he touched knew better, as proven by the thousands who attended his wake in Quezon City.

Farewell poet, singer, dancer. Here's praying your odyssey has come full circle.

* * *

Below is a poignant letter from Ed Picson, the famous PBA sportscaster.

"Dear Al,

"Allow me to share with you my experience with a beautiful person named Fe Yabyabin. She was my English teacher in my freshman year in Letran High School many moons ago. She was a 20-year-old fresh UST graduate (cum laude), a pixie of a girl with wide, radiant eyes and a burning desire to share her knowledge.

"I was fortunate that Ms. Yabyabin took me under her wings, coaching me in my first Oratorical Contest (we won the gold), urged me to join the Forensics Club that she formed (I became club president) and even encouraged my attempts at the written word. That I ultimately made a career out of public speaking was, in no small measure, a testament to her influence.

"Every student who was ever under Ms. Y acknowledges the passion that she put into her job. She never married, although I'm very sure many tried to woo her, but she was so much into her vocation. She taught for 10 years in Letran and in recent years also made admirers out of her wards at the Paref-Woodrose School for Girls.

"A few months ago, I heard Ms. Yabyabin was suffering from terminal cancer. I could only send her regular text messages of encouragement and support since she wasn't accepting visitors. She was very appreciative and showed great faith in God and courage in fighting her malady.

"Last Friday, she finally lost the fight. My classmates and I join her family and many friends in mourning the loss of Ms. Y. But we know she is now happy in the presence of the Lord she served and loved. We regularly visit her at the Funeraria Paz in Sucat, Parañaque, where her remains lie until Wednesday (tomorrow) and will finally be laid to rest in her hometown of Ibaan, Batangas, on Thursday, Aug. 11, after the 1 p.m. Mass. We bid our beloved teacher a warm farewell."

* * *

And since we are into the topic of farewells, here's another goodbye—to Z Gorres, the promising boxer from Cebu.

I still wish him good luck even though as early as two weeks before his last fight at Sta. Ana, I withdrew my association with him following his split with his benefactor, Rudy Salud.

I can't stand people stuffing so much air between their ears so early in their careers.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
bi-sugo
Joey De Leon
Gladys Guevarra
and Mahal
ABC
Wow maling Mali!
NGAYONG SABADO 9PM
ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN					Teledyaryo	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Pilipinas Ngayon Na!		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)					
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Qpids	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Kampanerang Kuba	Green Rose	Oh! Feel Young	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		World Pool Championship (Day 6 Session2)				Sentro	Strange But True	ABC Action Movies (Totoy Guwapo)				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		Battle At The Bridges	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Friends	Shaman King	Full Metal Alchemist	Full House		24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo	Attic Cat	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Ambush Makeover		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Up Close And Personal		
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		MTV		Nuts	Outrageous	Chili Factor	King Of Adventure		IBC News Tonite	MTV	
SBN 21		New Life TV Shop		New Life TV Shop				EZ Shop				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Superfine Tv Shopping		Buhay Pinoy	
Studio 23								Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	The Rebel Billionaire	Angel		Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Top Of The Pops	Mobile MYX Top Picks	My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN				ESPN Great Outdoor Games				Pool/Snooker Rack 'Em Up 4		Asian X Games '05 Seoul		Sportscenter Asia	World Snooker Tour Embassy World Champs						Sportscenter Asia
Sports Plus				Tour De France Highlights		Get A Grip On Golf	Golf Hawaii 2004	World's Greatest Auto Shows		Monster Jam	Tour De France	Buick Open Highlights		Brickyard 400 Highlights		Celebrity Poker Tournament			
Cinemax	100 Mile Rule (2:45 PM)			For Love Or Money			Darkman III Die Darkman Die			Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle				D.C. Sniper 23 Days Of Fear			A Perfect World		
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Regenesis		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Regenesis					Agency II (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Piglet's Big Movie			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Jumping Ship	
Discovery Channel		What The Ancients Knew		Sayonara Chang!		The Ultimate Guide		Living With Tigers		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Weather Extreme		Science Mysteries	
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		The Mafia		Harem Conspiracy		Dogs With Jobs	Hayden Turner's Wildlife Challenge	Wow! Shark Quest		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		The Mafia	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	SD Gundam Force	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Johnny Bravo	Time Squad	Thundercats	Codename: Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/ What Planet Are You From	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot/ Right On Top	The Adventure Of Don Juan	SpongeBob SquarePants	Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Naturally Sadie	Sabrina: The Teenage Witch	Drake & Josh	Romeo	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Are You Afraid of the Dark?
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix!	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		E! True Hollywood Story		Road & Track	Back To Basics
Star World	Becker	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Ed		Desperate Housewives		Tru Calling		Friends	Ed
AXN		When Animals Attack		When Animals Attack		Now See This	Now See This	PSI Factor (Season III)		Beastmaster		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 6		AXN Shakedown	
JackTV	Kid Notorious	Just For Laughs	Beat The Geeks	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wwe Heat	
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	[illegible]	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		For Love Or Money		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO				The Juror				The Matrix Reloaded (5:55 PM)				Chasing Liberty (8:10 PM)		Sex And The City 45: To Market, To Market	Gattaca				
Star Movies			Father Of The Bride Part II (3:45 PM)				Nine Months				Cheaper By The Dozen (7:20 PM)			A Guy Thing			The Extra-ordinary Gentlemen (10:45PM)		
Cinema One		Kailan Tama Ang Mali				Saan Ka Man Naroroon (Movie)				I Will Survive				Megamol				Di Quo Si	
EWTN	Angels Of God	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Saints For The Third Millenium: St. Therese Of Lisieux	Faith Factory 6	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Pope Pius XII	The Journey Home		Daily Mass Live		Angelus (9:15 PM)	Swear To God	The Sacraments Through The Ages	St. Catherine Of Sienna	Web Of Faith	

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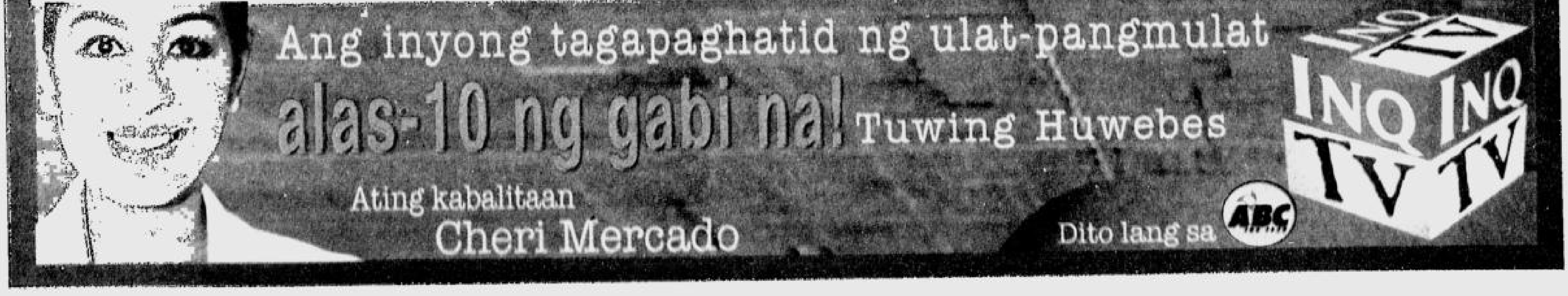


Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa
ABC
INQ TV

Arroyo, Ochoa top Shell active chess

CHRISTIAN Arroyo and Karl Victor Ochoa scored 6.5 points apiece to rule their respective divisions Sunday in the Southern Leg of the 2005 Shell National Youth Active-Chess Championships at SM City Batangas in Batangas City.

Arroyo, playing out of Far Eastern University, finally ended his long search for a leg victory in the annual series sponsored by Pilipinas Shell. He won six games and split the point with Menard de Ocampo in the sixth round to capture the junior title.

Arroyo bested three bets from Rizal Technological University, including Jonathan Campo, who pooled 6 points in the seven-round Swiss-system tournament.

Campo nipped teammates Mark Almazol and Wendell Hitoriaga for second place after a tiebreak.

Arroyo, Campo and Almazol all made it to the national finals in October.

Ochoa topped the kiddies' side of the event backed by Shell Better Mileage gasoline, Accel, Cebu Pacific, McDonald's, and Shellane in cooperation with SM Supermalls, Gaisano Mall (Davao City) and Lim Ketkai Mall (Cagayan de Oro City).

He drew with Sta. Elena High teammate Michael Angelo Angeles in the final round to secure the win.

Ywen Lababo of RTU and Wilbert Pilarta of Marist School had 6 points each to finish second and third.

6,500 young athletes vying in 2005 Milo Little Olympics

ABOUT 6,500 young athletes from elementary and high schools in Metro Manila and nearby provinces are seeing action in the 2005 Milo Little Olympics slated Sept. 10, 11, 17 and 18 at the Marikina Sports Park in Marikina City.

In all, 1,565 medals will be at stake in 11 sports—athletics, badminton, chess, football, gymnastics, lawn tennis, swimming, taekwondo, sepak takraw, table tennis and volleyball—in this, the 15th year of the games for future Olympians.

This year's Little Olympics also offers about P500,000 worth of educational assistance and sports equipment to the Most Outstanding Athletes as well as to the top schools in high school and elementary levels.

Registration for the games organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop is going on at its secretariat at the Marikina Sports Park.

For inquiries, call 0915-9961874, 0916-4708286 or 4282069.

Luck rides . . .

From page A17

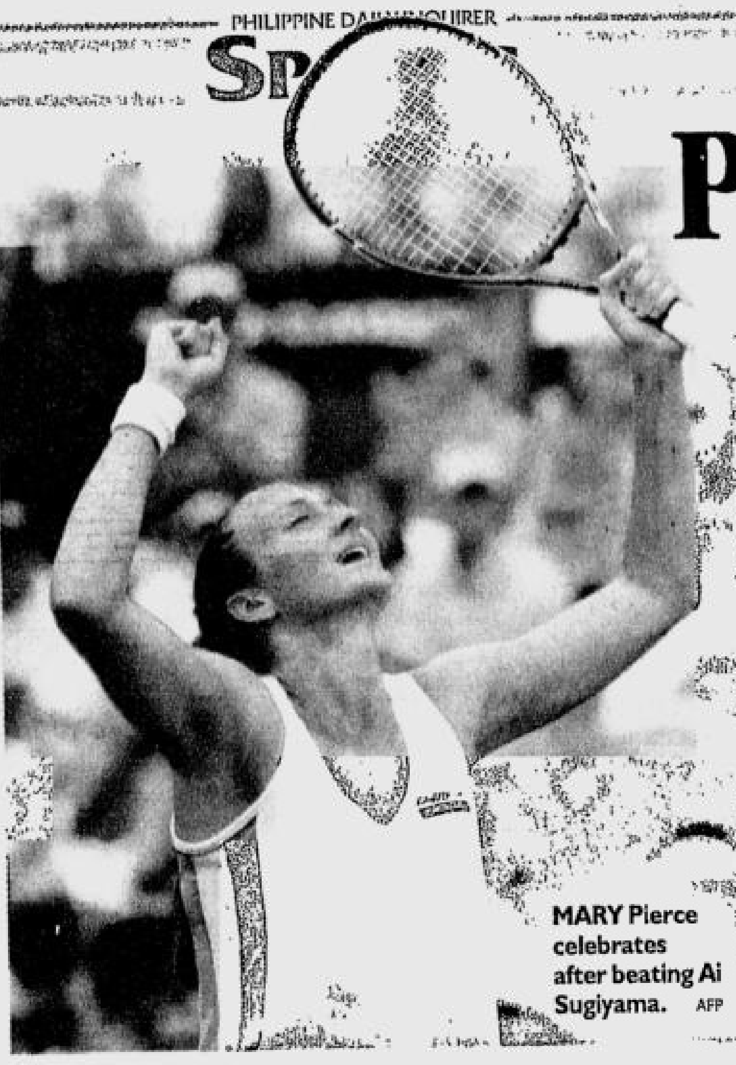
Alessandra Madrigal even though she only finished second to Paolo Eslao, who notched his fifth consecutive win in the KT 100 class.

The 9-year-old Madrigal, seasoned by stints abroad, showed up her older male rivals in the eight-man field as she came back from eighth to grab second place in the first heat. Then she regained the No. 2 spot from Ferdinand Reyes with 12 laps to go and stayed there for good. Jeff Reyes ended third.

Karting kids Juha Turalba and Vencer Suba of the Cebu Racing Group ruled their respective classes.

Turalba clocked 13:24.016 to prevail by 5.811 seconds over runner-up Gabby Borja and third placer Javi Benitez of Jet Racing in the Cadet 60 Expert class.

Suba, on the other hand, finished the 20-lap race in 14:44.050 to win by just 2.163 seconds over Franco Reyes and Renz Pazcoguin in the Cadet 60 Novice division.



MARY Pierce celebrates after beating Ai Sugiyama. AFP

Pierce snares Acura crown

SAN DIEGO, California—Roland Garros runner-up Mary Pierce easily beat Japan's Ai Sugiyama, 6-0, 6-3, to capture the $1.3-million WTA Acura Classic championship here on Sunday.

It was the first US outdoor hardcourt crown and first Tier 1 final in more than five years for 16-year veteran Pierce.

Pierce's first crown since 2004 will vault her three spots to No. 11 when the new WTA rankings are released on Monday.

Sugiyama advanced when countrywoman Akiko Morigami retired in the second set of their semifinal due to right knee tendonitis. Sugiyama was leading, 6-4, 4-3, at the time of Morigami's retirement.

The sixth-seeded Pierce, of France, needed seven match points to beat Sugiyama.

Pierce disposed of three opponents without dropping a set before hammering Sugiyama to earn $189,000 and her 17th career crown. *AFP*

Roddick prevails

WASHINGTON—Top seed Andy Roddick fired 18 aces, the last on match point, to defeat James Blake, 7-5, 6-3, here Sunday in an all-American final at the $600,000 ATP Washington Classic. Roddick captured the $74,250 top prize and his fourth title of the year at the US Open tune-up. *AFP*

Gatlin posts biggest ever 100-m margin

HELSINKI, Finland—Justin Gatlin swept away opposition to win the 100-meter sprint Sunday and add the world championship title to his Olympic gold medal.

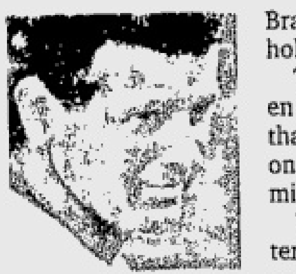
The overwhelming favorite didn't even have to dip for the line to clock 9.88 seconds and hold a massive .17 second margin over silver medalist Michael Frater of Jamaica. Defending champion Kim Collins was third, also in 10.05.

Now, the American will go for the 200 title and the 400 relay to emulate the feat of compatriot Maurice Greene in 1999.

Performing on a tender ankle, Olympic champion Carolina Kluft fought back to beat France's Eunice Barber in the heptathlon and retain her world titles.

The Swede, who strained her jumping ankle on the eve of the seven-event competition, capped a thrilling weekend by coming back on the final bend of the closing 800 and overtake Barber and clinch the title. She won with 6,887 points. *AP*

Goosen rules The International



GOOSEN REUTERS

DENVER, Colorado—South Africa's Retief Goosen scored 32 points to capture his first PGA Tour title this year by winning The International.

After rain postponed Thursday's first round, 63 players were to take the course for the final two rounds Sunday.

There normally was a second cut where the field is reduced to the top 36 players and ties, but in an effort to play 36 holes, there was no third-round cut.

Goosen scored eight points in the third round, putting him within four of leader Brandt Jobe entering the final 18 holes.

The South African scored seven points in the final round, but that was good enough to finish one point ahead of Jobe, who was minus-3 over the final 18 holes.

The win could not come at better time for Goosen, who will be one of the favorites at next week's PGA Championship, the final major of the season.

Goosen led after three rounds at the US Open before falling apart and finished tied for fifth at the British Open. *AFP*

Racing

AT SANTA ANA
BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Habagat 2. Gold Collar 3. Decidido 4. Sir Olizon
Race 2—1. Hezagone Babes 2. Parrot Moe/My Rabbonnie 3. Smiling Jaeda 4. Heart of Jonna
Race 3—1. Stradivarius 2. Lightning Strike 3. Highly Connected 4. Tropical Sun 5. Shining Lance
Race 4—1. Joint Account 2. Material Ruler 3. Batang Westside 4. Money Man
Race 5—1. Letshaveaparty 2. Gold Money 3. Seven Lakes 4. Prima Vera 5. Men of Honor
Race 6—1. Musikero 2. Pay To See 3. Kim Possible 4. Jay Nicole
Race 7—1. Bunker Buster 2. Legally Blonde 3. Reporter 4. Mr. Lucas 5. Cat Prince
Race 8—1. Starry Night 2. Awesome Power 3. Power Dance 4. Prickly Heat 5. Happy Again 6. Mercury Rising

Albania, Cruz beat Asian Women's Boxing rivals

THE PHILIPPINES' Annie Albania and Annaliza Cruz posted contrasting wins Sunday, making up for compatriot Jennifer Pecking's defeat at the start of the 3rd Asian Women's Boxing Championship in Kaoshiung, Taiwan.

Albania dominated Indian Meena Kumari from start to finish en route to a 21-10 victory in their flyweight showdown while bantamweight Cruz came from behind to nip Thailand's Juaitip Chuaseng via a countback.

Trailing, 11-6, Cruz waged an all-out attack in the third and final round, enabling her to catch up with the taller Thai at 16-16.

Albania caught Kumari with solid combinations right in the first round for an 8-1 lead that took the fight out of the game but raw Indian.

Ranged against the taller and methodical Jong Hyang of the People's Republic of Korea, Pecking proved to be an easy target, forcing the referee to stop the light-flyweight bout via RSC-OS (Referee-Stopped Contest-Overscoring) with one minute and 48 seconds gone in the second round and the count at 20-5.

Other members of the team sent to the tournament by boxing association president Manny Lopez are lightweight Mitchelle Martinez, pinweight Gretchen Abaniel and bantam Jouvilet Chilem.

St. Clare ties NEU for lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ST. CLARE sustained its winning ways when it ripped Better Children of St. Clare Montessori Center, 105-84, yesterday and shared the lead in the junior division of the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) basketball tournament at the UM Gym.

Marlon Gomez made 20 points on top of 12 rebounds and Mark Austria added 15 markers and 12 assists as the Baby Saints climbed to 5-1 in a tie with New Era University.

Tonton Tolete also had an inspired performance for St. Clare with 11 points and 12 rebounds, while Roi Coronel and Eugene Torres added 13 and 12 points, respectively.

University of Manila dealt NEU its first setback with a 72-64 victory while University of Makati blasted AMA Computer, 100-82.

The Baby Hawks, with Christian Gobis firing 20 points on top of eight rebounds, climbed to 4-1 while the UMak Baby Wizards picked up their second win in five games.

AMA fell to 1-4 despite JR Maranon's 25 points and 15 rebounds.

Crack wingmen, guards . . .

From page A17

Eastern U's Miranda.

The 24-year-old Salvador, who helped College of St. Benilde capture its first-ever NCAA crown in 2000 and was a member of the league's Mythical Five in 2001, is likely to be tapped by Purefoods.

"To play in the PBA is a lifetime dream," said Salvador. "This is what I've been working for all these years. I promise to give my best regardless of what team gets my services."

The Express would most likely exercise their fifth and sixth overall picks on UE's Niño "KG" Canaleta and La Salle's Mac Cardona, the reigning PBL and UAAP MVP.

The other players who attracted the attention of coaches during the two-day camp were FEU's Cesar Catli, San Sebastian's Leo Najorda, St. Benilde's Ronald Capati, Santo Tomas' Alwyn Espiritu, University of Visayas' Neil Rañeses and San Beda's Aljun Cordero.

"They've got a lot of wingmen and about three solid point guards, but there is no legitimate center," said Barangay Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen. "The big men are all prospective projects for the future."

Coaches Ryan Gregorio of Purefoods and Alfrancis Chua of Sta. Lucia agreed with Tanquingcen, noting that the big men like Washington operate on the outside while the guards were the ones who post up.

The pro hopefuls were tested for their stamina, strength, agility and other individual skills during the camp.

Canaleta topped the vertical jump at 11-3, followed by Washington at 11-1, Paolo Buguia 10-11, Jerwin Gaco 10-10, Holper 10-9, Catli 10-8, Valentin Domingo 10-8, Capati 10-8, Kelvin Raymond Dula 10-8 and Cyril Santiago 10-8.

Ismael Junio was the fastest in the 50-meter sprint at 6.28 seconds, followed by Froilan Baguion at 6.31, Cabagnot 6.32, Canaleta 6.40, Capati 6.50, Miranda 6.52, Catli 6.52, Chico Lanete 6.53, Mark Abadia 6.54 and Washington 6.56.

Washington and Romar Menor were tied at No. 1 in bench press with 35 repetitions, then came Salvador with 31, Gerard Jones with 29, Buguia 26, Ryan Dy 26, Gaco 25, Holper 25, Capati 24, BJ Manalo 24 and Reynaldo Mendoza 23.

Dy was best in push-ups with 70 followed by Miranda with 69, Capati 68, Gaco 67, Lanete 65, Dula 62, Holper 59, Menor 57 and Washington 55.

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20
2005
INQUIRER
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RP credit rating in peril
Erap on tape: Bad script
CBCP shuns GMA-quit call
7 out of 10 in Metro do not trust GMA
Back to battle of tapes

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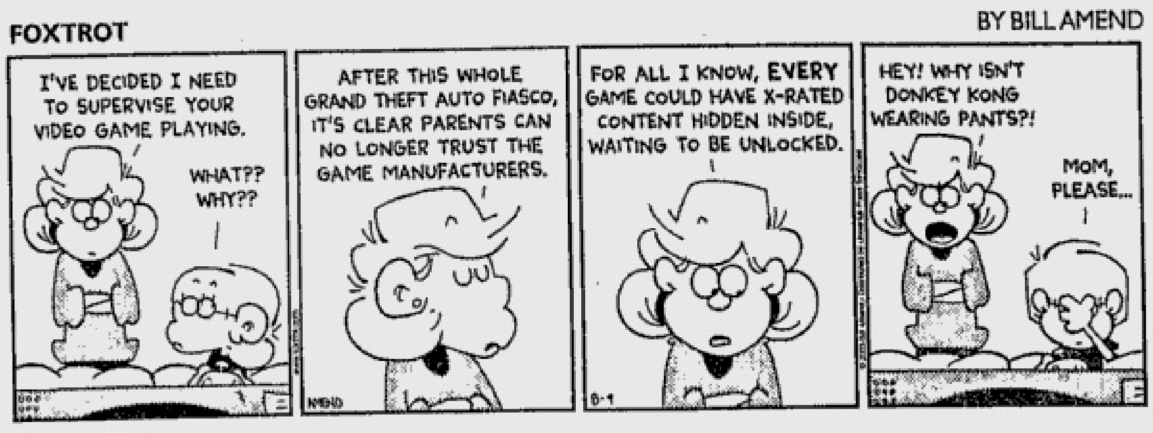
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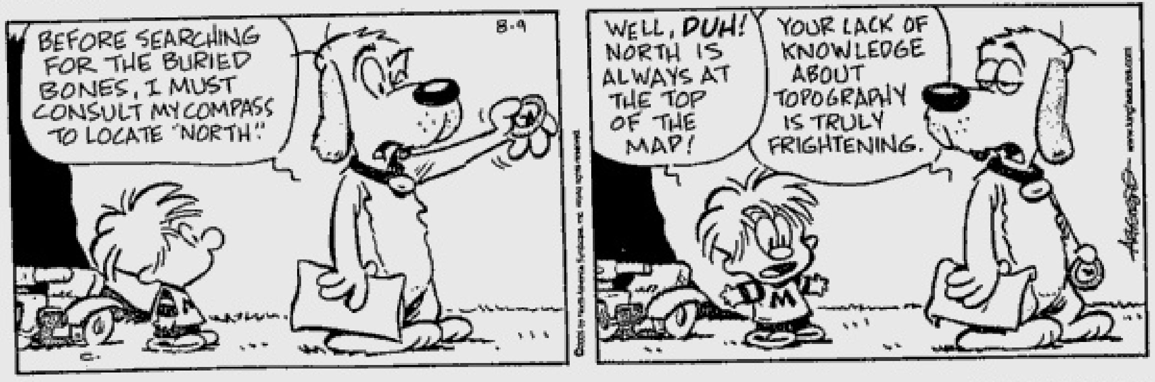
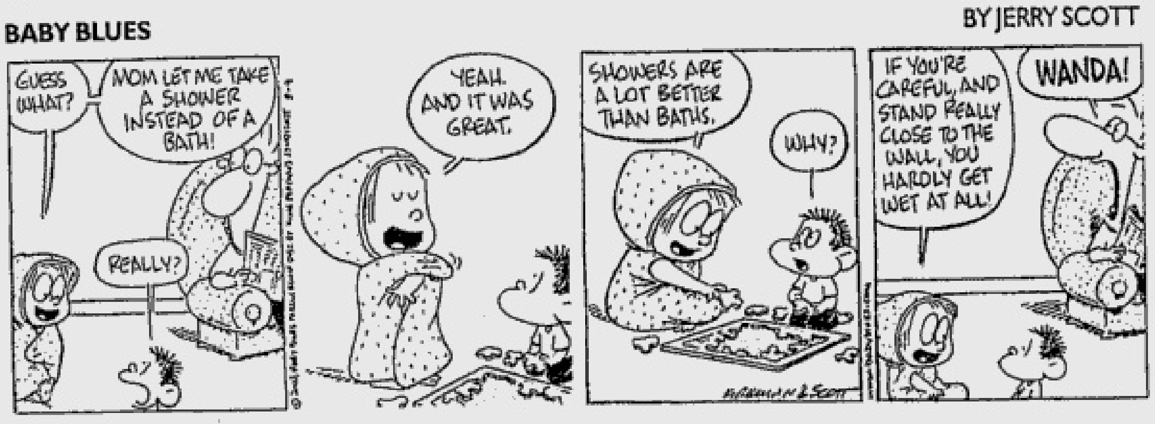
WHAT?? WHY??
AFTER THIS WHOLE GRAND THEFT AUTO FIASCO, IT'S CLEAR PARENTS CAN NO LONGER TRUST THE GAME MANUFACTURERS.
FOR ALL I KNOW, EVERY GAME COULD HAVE X-RATED CONTENT HIDDEN INSIDE, WAITING TO BE UNLOCKED.
HEY! WHY ISN'T DONKEY KONG WEARING PANTS?!
MOM, PLEASE...
8-9

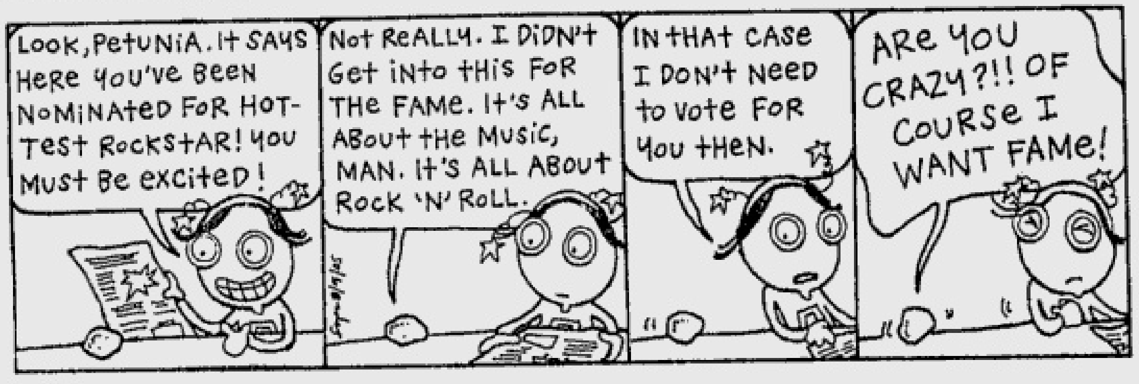
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


BEFORE SEARCHING FOR THE BURIED BONES, I MUST CONSULT MY COMPASS TO LOCATE "NORTH."
8-9
WELL, DUH! NORTH IS ALWAYS AT THE TOP OF THE MAP!
YOUR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TOPOGRAPHY IS TRULY FRIGHTENING.

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


GUESS WHAT?
MOM LET ME TAKE A SHOWER INSTEAD OF A BATH!
REALLY?
YEAH. AND IT WAS GREAT.
SHOWERS ARE A LOT BETTER THAN BATHS.
WHY?
IF YOU'RE CAREFUL, AND STAND REALLY CLOSE TO THE WALL, YOU HARDLY GET WET AT ALL!
WANDA!

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Look, Petunia. It says here you've been nominated for Hottest Rockstar! You must be excited!
Not really. I didn't get into this for the fame. It's all about the music, man. It's all about Rock 'n' Roll.
In that case I don't need to vote for you then.
Are you crazy?!! Of course I want fame!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a kind and generous heart. You're thoughtful and considerate. You can be a tower of strength for those around you, especially family. You're interested in human psychology. You're enormously tenacious, and will pursue whatever you want with a strong focus. The year ahead is a lovely, social year benefiting partnerships, in particular.

Birthdate of: Melanie Griffith, actress; Sam Elliott, actor; Whitney Houston, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Partnerships matter a lot to you today. In fact, you might find yourself attracted to somebody completely new. (Perhaps this is a crush?)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Matters at work flow quite smoothly today. Co-workers are cooperative. You also have a desire to get better organized in every way. (Excellent!)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel playful, prankish and flirtatious today. You want to have fun! You want to please others for some reason. You want their cooperation and even their approval. (That's why you're telling jokes.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Home, family and real estate are your primary focuses today. You might want to do something to improve the appearance of where you live. You can also promote harmony within the family.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Busy day! Shopping, buying and selling, negotiating, wheeling and dealing—these are the areas that flow smoothly for you today. You're hot stuff!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Stay on top of financial issues today. Make friends with your bank account. Keep track of what money you have, and what you don't have. At least get the big picture.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Moon is in your sign today. This suits you perfectly! It brings you a little bit of good luck; however, it does make you a bit more emotional about things.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You need a bit of solitude today. Quit trying to be all things to all people. Just focus on your own needs. (You owe it to yourself.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day to enjoy the company of others. Focus on meetings, groups, clubs, associations and chatting with friends. A female friend in particular might help you now.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today's Moon is at the very top of your chart. This calls attention to you, albeit briefly. Therefore, be aware of this. People notice you now.

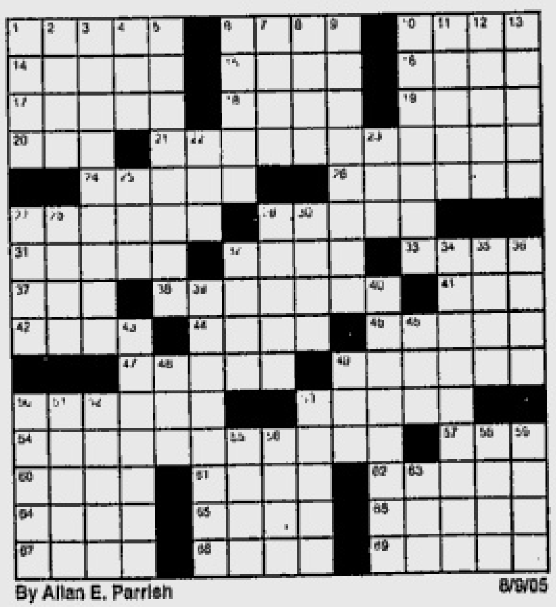
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Do something different today. It's important for you to break from your routine. You want adventure; and you want to learn something new. Be bold and daring!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day to figure out how to share something with someone. You might want to talk to your partner about the division of labor over something. Make sure you feel good about this decision.

DAILY CROSSWORD

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams



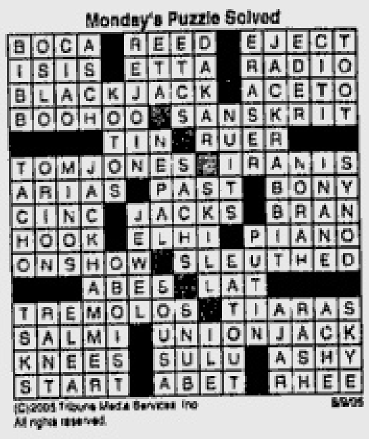
By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

8/9/05

ACROSS
1 Bonehead play
6 Sign of healing
10 Spinning toys
14 Panhandle
15 English sculptor
16 Raison d'__
17 Port west of Hong Kong
18 Trebek or Haley
19 Satellite of Saturn
20 Biblical craft
21 Perry Mason's secretary
24 Rate of return
26 Scottish terriers
27 Transversely
29 Disdain
31 Actress Tea
32 Physicist Niels
33 Fix text
37 Nabokov novel
38 Thoroughfares
41 Wedding vow
42 Cincinnati team
44 Kicker Jason
45 Is wearing
47 Samantha of "The Collector"
49 Predicament
50 "The Ice Storm" director
53 Two-footed creature
54 Raspberries hit
57 Tear
60 Part of "SNL"
61 Mystique
62 Parenthetical statement
64 __ the Red
65 1982 Disney sci-fi film
66 Flowing water
67 Medium-distance run
68 Fashion maven Klensch
69 Reverie

DOWN
1 Austen classic
2 Crowd noise
3 Ice cream flavor
4 South American tuber
5 Zimbabwe, once
6 Burn with hot liquid
7 Telephone
8 Surface size
9 Ballgame record
10 Earthenware dish
11 Alternative
12 Primp
13 Bleachers and benches
22 Golfer Ernie
23 Black goo
25 Charged particle
27 Banned orchard spray
28 Sign over
29 Sub's ears?
30 Buddy
32 Actor Lugosi
34 PC part
35 Revered figure
36 Sound quality
39 Live passively
40 Dry dock location
43 Magnum portrayer
46 Marksman
48 Hair goo
49 Entertainer Zadora
50 Shoelace tip
51 Bete __ (bane)
52 Rossdale of Bush
53 "Call Me __"
55 Pitch
56 God of love
58 Notion
59 Beauty parlor do
63 Knight's title

Monday's Puzzle Solved


BOCA REED EJECT
ISIS ETTA RADIO
BLACKJACK ACETO
BOOHOO SANSKRIT
TIN RUER
TOMJONES IRANIS
ARIAS PAST BONY
CINC JACKS BRAN
HOOK ELHI PIANO
ONSHOW SLEUTHED
ABES LAT
TREMOLOS TIARAS
SALMI UNIONJACK
KNEES SULU ASHY
START ABET RHEE

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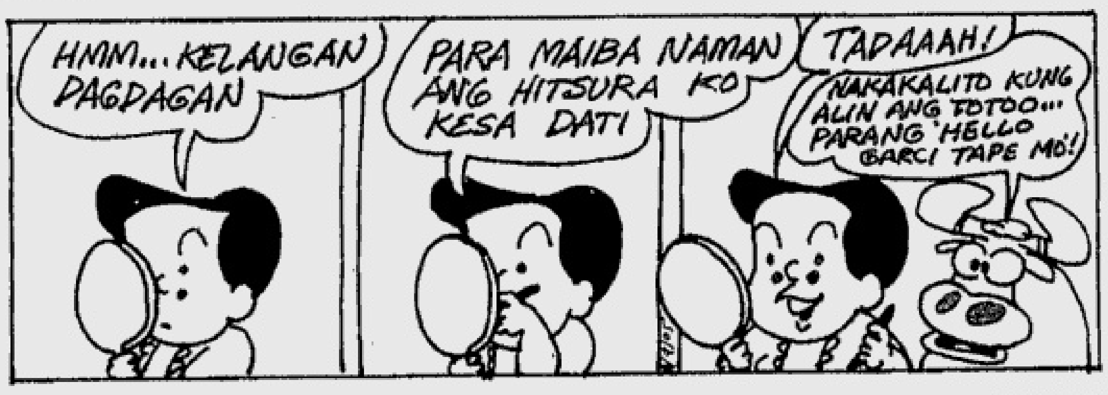
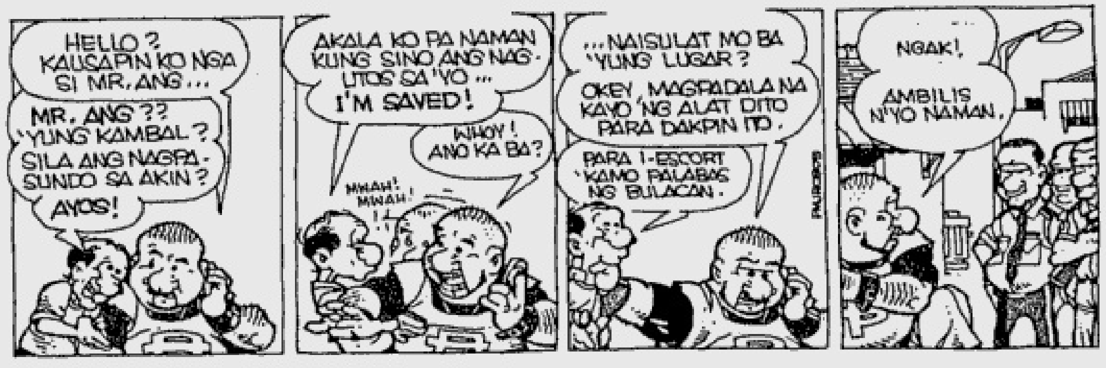
8/9/05

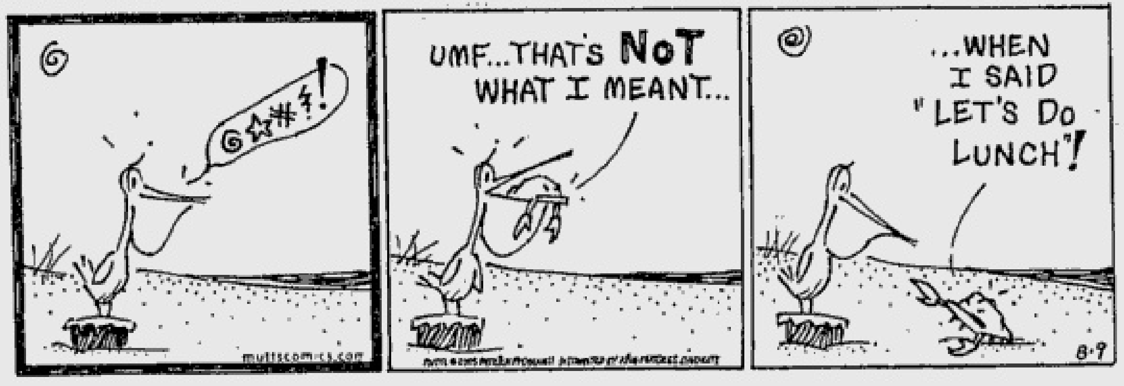
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


HMM... KELANGAN DAGDAGAN
PARA MAIBA NAMAN ANG HITSURA KO KESA DATI
TADAAAH!
NAKAKALITO KUNG ALIN ANG TOTOO... PARANG 'HELLO GARCI TAPE MO'!

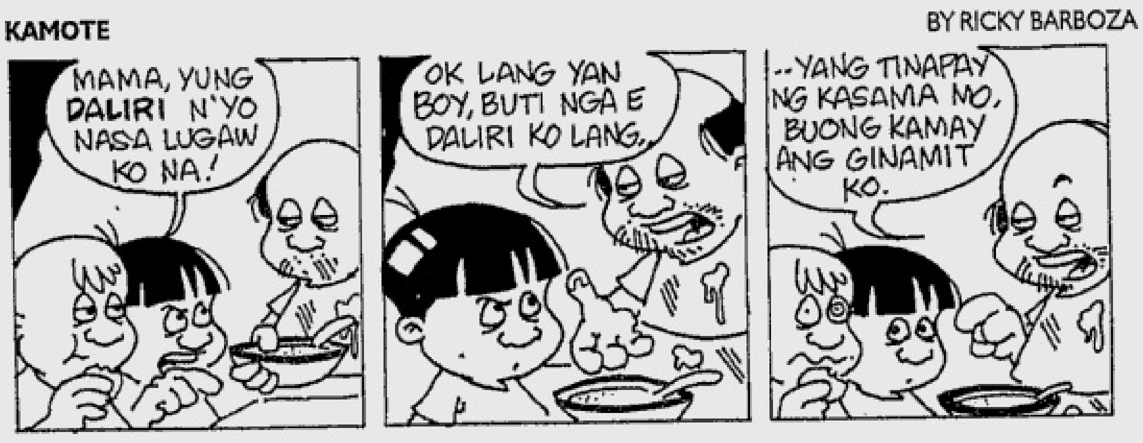
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


HELLO? KAUSAPIN KO NGA SI MR. ANG...
MR. ANG?? 'YUNG KAMBAL? SILA ANG NAGPASUNDO SA AKIN?
AYOS!
AKALA KO PA NAMAN KUNG SINO ANG NAG-UTOS SA 'YO... I'M SAVED!
MWAH! MWAH!
WHOY! ANO KA BA?
...NAISULAT MO BA 'YUNG LUGAR?
OKEY, MAGPADALA NA KAYO 'NG ALAT DITO PARA DAKPIN ITO.
PARA I-ESCORT 'KAMO PALABAS NG BULACAN.
NGAK!
AMBILIS N'YO NAMAN.

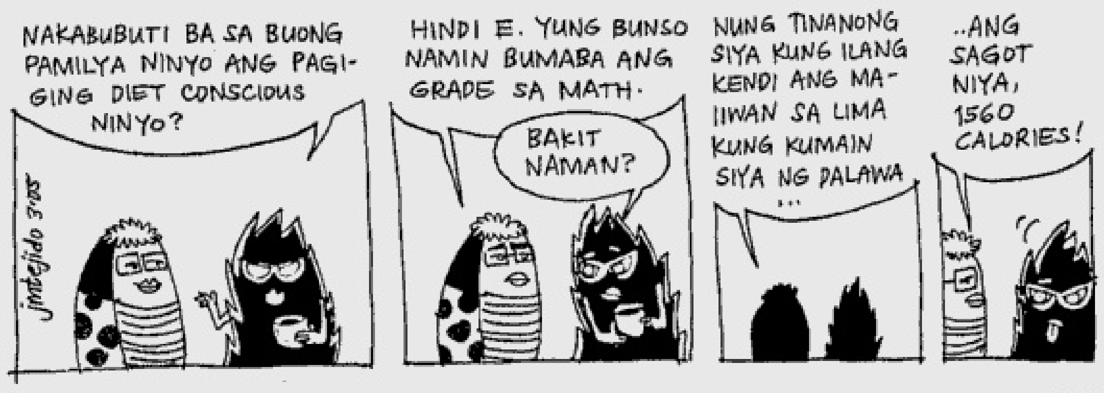
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


UMF... THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...
...WHEN I SAID "LET'S DO LUNCH"!
8-9
muttscomics.com

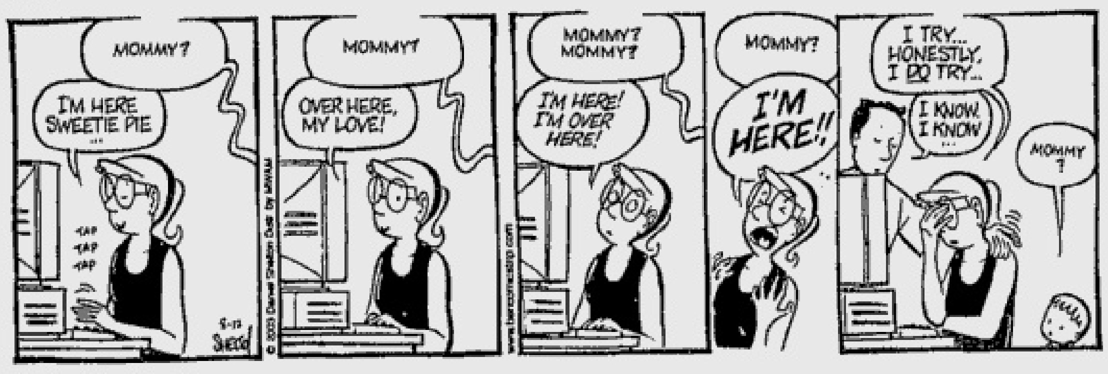
KAMOTE BY RICKY BARBOZA


MAMA, YUNG DALIRI N'YO NASA LUGAW KO NA!
OK LANG YAN BOY, BUTI NGA E DALIRI KO LANG.
..YANG TINAPAY NG KASAMA MO, BUONG KAMAY ANG GINAMIT KO.

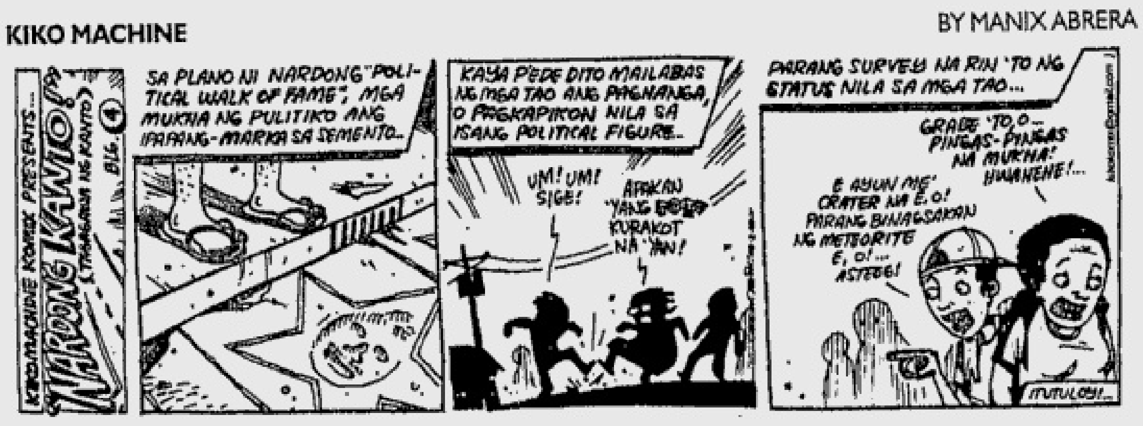
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKABUBUTI BA SA BUONG PAMILYA NINYO ANG PAGIGING DIET CONSCIOUS NINYO?
HINDI E. YUNG BUNSO NAMIN BUMABA ANG GRADE SA MATH.
BAKIT NAMAN?
NUNG TINANONG SIYA KUNG ILANG KENDI ANG MAIIWAN SA LIMA KUNG KUMAIN SIYA NG DALAWA...
..ANG SAGOT NIYA, 1560 CALORIES!
jmtejido 3'05

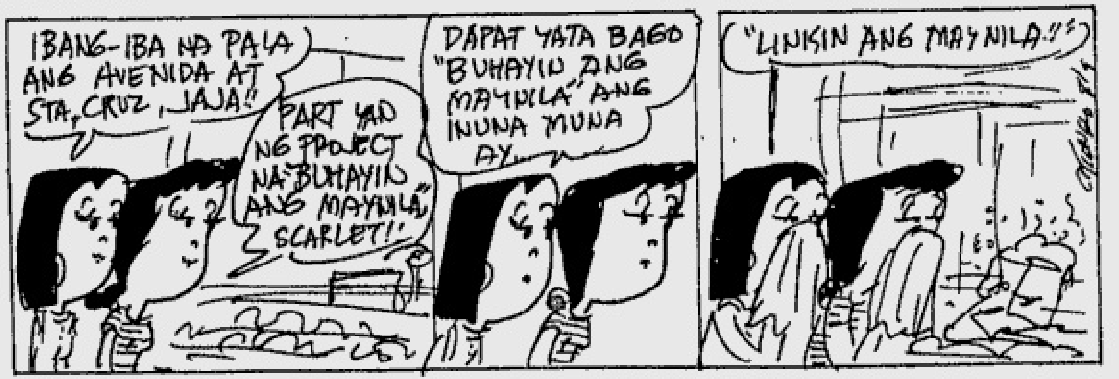
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


MOMMY?
I'M HERE SWEETIE PIE...
TAP TAP TAP
MOMMY?
OVER HERE, MY LOVE!
MOMMY? MOMMY?
I'M HERE! I'M OVER HERE!
MOMMY?
I'M HERE!!
I TRY... HONESTLY, I DO TRY...
I KNOW, I KNOW...
MOMMY?

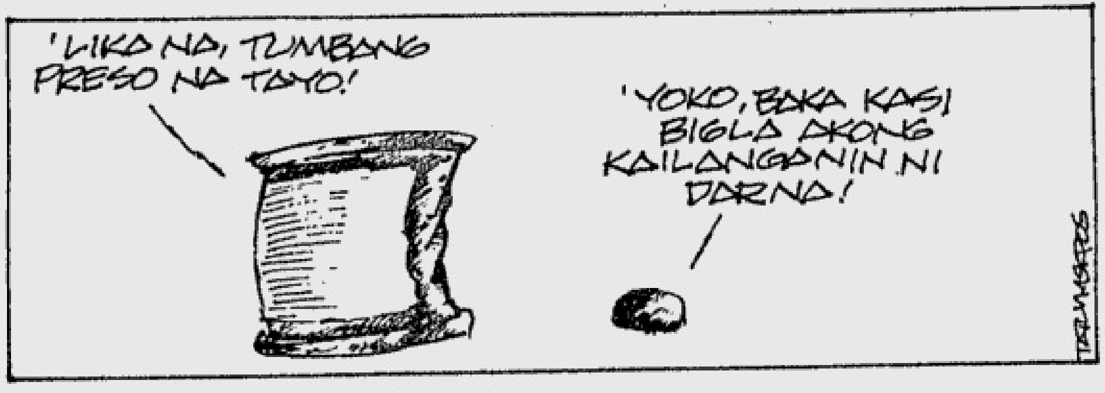
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


KIKOMACHINE KOMIX PRESENTS... NARDONG KANTO! (TAGAGAWA NG KANTO) BLG. 4
SA PLANO NI NARDONG "POLITICAL WALK OF FAME", MGA MUKHA NG PULITIKO ANG IPAPANG-MARKA SA SEMENTO...
KAYA P'EDE DITO MAILABAS NG MGA TAO ANG PAGHANGA, O PAGKAPIKON NILA SA ISANG POLITICAL FIGURE..
UM! UM! SIGE!
APAKAN 'YANG KURAKOT NA 'YAN!
PARANG SURVEY NA RIN 'TO NG STATUS NILA SA MGA TAO...
GRABE 'TO, O.. PINGAS-PINGAS NA MUKHA! HWAHEHE!...
E AYUN ME' CRATER NA E, O! PARANG BINAGSAKAN NG METEORITE E, O!... ASTEEG!
ITUTULOY!...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


IBANG-IBA NA PALA ANG AVENIDA AT STA. CRUZ, JAJA!
PART YAN NG PROJECT NA "BUHAYIN ANG MAYNILA," SCARLET!
DAPAT YATA BAGO "BUHAYIN ANG MAYNILA" ANG INUNA MUNA AY..
"LINISIN ANG MAYNILA!"

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'LIKO NA, TUMBANG PRESO NA TAYO!
'YOKO, BAKA KASI BIGLA AKONG KAILANGANIN NI DARNA!

Did Nora really beat Hillary for a trophy?

DID Nora Aunor really win the Best Actress Award for "Naglalayag" at the 2005 Provincetown International Film Festival in Massachusetts?

This piece of news was relayed to media organizations on Saturday by a Filipino who supposedly attended the festival.

Jojo de Vera, an officer of an Aunor fan club, reported that Nora beat Gong Li ("2046"), Zhang Ziyi ("Mo Li Hua Kai" or "Jasmine Women") and Oscar winner Hilary Swank ("Million Dollar Baby") for the trophy.

The story was carried in GMA 7's show biz talk show "S Files" on Sunday, and included a phone interview with the actress from her current residence in San Bruno, California.

Aunor said she didn't know her movie had competed, but that she was happy. A quick visit to the festival website, www.ptownfilmfest.com, however, revealed there was no entry this year titled "Naglalayag." Or "Million Dollar Baby," for that matter.

LA AUNOR was surprised

Bribing janitor to pass exams

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

GUESS who this young actor is? He has been in cahoots with the janitor of the university where he is now a junior. The teen idol asks the janitor to steal test papers for him. In return, he promises to pay him a hefty amount. The young star is desperate to pass all his exams because he wants to take up further studies abroad. The janitor has kept his end of the deal for the past two semesters but the actor hasn't paid him in full. He is in dire financial straits since his home studio has not given him any project for quite some time now. When the janitor nags about the balance, the actor threatens to ask the campus frats to gang up on him. Wonder if the university has any inkling that the person assigned to keep the campus clean has to clean up his act as well? Imagine the janitor having access to the test papers before exam time? As for the young actor's case, it's good that he is bent on finishing his studies. But he should not treat it like some movie plot where the end justifies the means.

* * *

Guess who this TV host/actor is? The staff of a show where he was a guest was peeved because of his demands. Prior to taping, he agreed to the fixed talent fee. But when he found out that the episode was going to be aired in two parts, he started badgering the executive producer for additional talent fee. One of the staff lamented: "He was paid for one taping day, which was finished in one day. Why is he charging extra? Besides, he's difficult. He refused to deliver some lines for fear that they might irk his home studio—where he has no projects, by the way."

It reminds me of one of the many show biz lessons from my mom: "Do not mind working more even if you are paid less. The experience will help you get to the day when you will be working less and paid more."

Ara's not looking

ARA Mina is not out to replace **Jomari Yllana** in her life. So even if she has hordes of suitors, Ara is weighing things carefully. I heard that **Polo Ravales** is the most ardent of her admirers and that Ara is on the verge of falling for him. If it's for the long haul, Polo should also be consistent and not just persistent.

Watering Hole promo

TO PAY tribute to hard-working call center agents, Watering Hole Bar & Restaurant launched the "Two to Six" beer and food promo. From 2 a.m. to 6 a.m., Monday to Saturday, beer will be at happy hour price—P20. Breakfast package is P100 for *tocino, longanisa*, corned beef and my favorite *tapsilog*! After working hard, call center agents can party harder! This month, WH has an interesting lineup of acoustic groups as well: Monday—Art of Donna, Tuesday—PS2, Wednesday—Metafour and Blush, Thursday—3rd Ave and Industria. Weekends are reserved for show bands, for dance music: Friday—En Masse and Twist of 8, Saturday—Classified and Juice.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringhole-shangrila@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 STEALTH PG13 11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:15
CINEMA 2 CHARLIE & the CHOCOLATE FACTORY - GP 10:50, 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50
DOLBY DIGITAL
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 CRASH R13 11:10, 1:25, 3:40, 5:55, 8:10, 10:25
CINEMA 4 YEAR OF THE YAO - PG13 12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00
CINEMA 5 CHARLIE & the CHOCOLATE FACTORY - GP 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM
September 2 & 3 MOJO FLY 8:30PM
Sept 15,22,23,24 JOAQUIN & FAITH CUNETA "ONE" 9PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY MTRCB GP 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 LMF
2 CRASH MTRCB R-13 1:30, 4:05, 6:40, 9:15 LMF
3 WEDDING CRASHERS MTRCB: PG-13 11:15, 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:15
4 STEALTH MTRCB PG-13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY MTRCB GP 1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30 LMF
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
A Blockbuster Gift for All Seasons
The Shang Cineplex Gift Certificates
Treat your family and friends to a thrilling movie experience only at the Shang.
Cinema Treats - for Cinemas 1,2,3 and 4
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Cinemas 1 to 4 - P150
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Call 633-7851 loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4735 for more details
Shangri-La Plaza

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 CRASH 1:15, 3:40, 6:05, 8:30, 10:50 R-13
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 11:05, 2:30, 5:20, 8:10, 11:00 GP
3 WEDDING CRASHERS 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30 PG-13
4 STEALTH 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City
☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
STEALTH PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY GP 1:10,3:50,6:30,9:10
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY GP 1:40,4:20,7:00,9:40
WEDDING CRASHERS PG13 12:35,3:05,5:35, 8:05,10:30
CRASH R13 11:50,2:25,5:00, 7:35,10:10
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY GP 2:10,4:50,7:30,10:10

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
NOW SHOWING
WAG KUKURAP, ETO NA ANG THRILL NA TRIP MO!!!
PUNTA TAYO SA DAIGDIG NG MGA PATAY ...MAKIKITA MO NA ANG DI NAKIKITA SA MUNDO NG MGA BUHAY!!
THE EYE ...INFINITY
THERE'S NO END TO WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE.
How about another eye?
WARNING: The 'Rite Of Eight' presented in this film is the most powerful resort to make contact with the spiritual world. Psychics never doubt its authenticity so don't try it alone!!

EVENTS . SCHEDULES . PROMOS
NOW SHOWING at SM CINEMA movietime
Johnny Depp
A TIM BURTON FILM
Charlie AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
Prepare for a taste of adventure at SM CINEMAS
Get LOADED with CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY MOVIE MEAL.
For only P120, enjoy it with TJ Hotdog Sandwich, Goldilocks Rainbow Chums, Popcorn, Lipton Iced Tea or Milo Drink*
*Milo drink is only available at SM Central Snackbar
GET IT NOW ONLY AT SM CINEMAS!
Be there as EPSON takes photographs of kids beside the whole Charlie and the Chocolate Factory gang for FREE at the cinema lobby of SM Megamall on August 13 and 14
FOR GUARANTEED SEATS
the podium 633-8976
1 CRASH 01:05FS/01:35MF 03:25LFS/04:00LMF/05:50END
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 12:50FS/1:20MF/3:50/6:20 08:20LFS/09:00LMF/10:55END
cebu (032) 231-3876
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW 12:00FS/12:10MF/02:03/03:54/05:46/07:39 09:23LFS/09:30LMF/11:15END
2 THE ISLAND 12:00FS/12:10MF/02:30/04:50/07:10 09:35LFS/09:30LMF/11:45END
3 STEALTH 12:00FS/12:10MF/02:30/04:50/07:10 09:10LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END
METRO MANILA
SM MEGAMALL
1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 THE ISLAND
5 WEDDING CRASHERS
6 STEALTH
7 ARAHAN
8 CRASH
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE
11 YEAR OF THE YAO
12 THE EYE INFINITY
SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 IF ONLY
2 NEW POLICE STORY
3 WEDDING CRASHERS
4 THE ISLAND
5 ARAHAN
6 D' ANOTHERS
7 STEALTH
8 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
9 THE EYE INFINITY
10 FANTASTIC FOUR
11 YEAR OF THE YAO
12 WAR OF THE WORLDS
SM NORTH EDSA
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 THE EYE INFINITY
3 STEALTH
4 D' ANOTHERS
5 WEDDING CRASHERS
6 ARAHAN
7 THE ISLAND
8 ICE PRINCESS
SM CITY STA MESA
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 YEAR OF THE YAO
3 STEALTH
4 CRASH
5 D' ANOTHERS
6 THE EYE INFINITY
7 WEDDING CRASHERS
8 CINEMANILA
9 THE ISLAND
10 ARAHAN
SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 CRASH
3 THE MACHINIST
4 STEALTH
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WEDDING CRASHERS
7 ARAHAN
8 YEAR OF THE YAO
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 THE EYE INFINITY
SM CITY MANILA
1 CRASH
2 STEALTH
3 YEAR OF THE YAO
4 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
5 THE ISLAND
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 CINEMANILA
8 IF ONLY
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 ARAHAN
11 WEDDING CRASHERS
12 THE EYE INFINITY
SM SAN LAZARO
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 STEALTH
3 THE ISLAND
4 THE EYE INFINITY
5 WEDDING CRASHERS
6 D' ANOTHERS
SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 STEALTH
4 THE ISLAND
SM CITY BICUTAN
1 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 THE ISLAND
4 STEALTH
LUZON
SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 STEALTH
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
3 THE ISLAND
4 IF ONLY
5 THE MACHINIST
6 D' ANOTHERS
SM CITY BACOOR
1 THE MACHINIST
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
4 D' ANOTHERS
5 STEALTH
6 D' ANOTHERS
7 YEAR OF THE YAO
8 THE ISLAND
SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 THE MACHINIST
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 IF ONLY
4 STEALTH
SM CITY LUCENA
1 NEW POLICE STORY
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 THE ISLAND
4 CREEP
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3 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
4 NEW POLICE STORY
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3 THE MACHINIST
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2 D' ANOTHERS
3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
4 NEW POLICE STORY
VISAYAS AND MINDANAO
SM CITY CEBU
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW
2 THE ISLAND
3 STEALTH
4 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
5 PREMONITION
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 D' ANOTHERS
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SM CITY ILOILO
1 NEW POLICE STORY
2 RESERVED
3 IF ONLY
4 D' ANOTHERS
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6 THE ISLAND
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2 D' ANOTHERS
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 CRASH
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

4 ARAHAN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

5 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

6 STEALTH
1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50

7 THE EYE INFINITY
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

8 WEDDING CRASHERS
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

9 YEAR OF THE YAO
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

10 THE ISLAND
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 THE EYE INFINITY
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	WEDDING CRASHERS	CRASH	THX CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE 12:00 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	THE YEAR OF THE YAO	D' ANOTHERS	CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY	STEALTH
GB1 GREENBELT 1	THE ISLAND 1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9.00	CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 3:00, 5:30, 8:00,10:30					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 1:20, 3.50, 6.20, 8.50, 11.20 GUARANTEED SEATS	THX CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 3:00, 5:30, 8:00,10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	STEALTH 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	CRASH 2:10, 4:30, 6.50, 9:10, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	WEDDING CRASHERS 1.50, 4:15, 6:40, 9.05 11 30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
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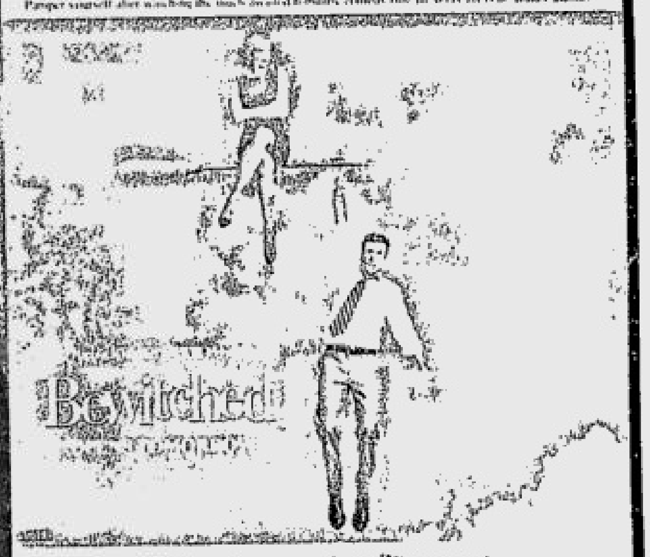

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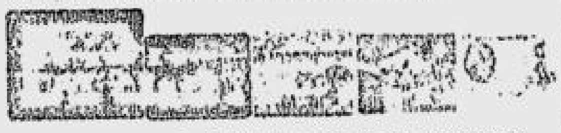


Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-354, Series of 2005

On dogs and underdogs

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Plus some more great movies on television

"THE SISTERHOOD of the Traveling Pants" brings to the screen **Ann Brashares'** best-selling novel about four fast friends (played by **Amber Tamblyn, Alexis Bledel, America Ferrera** and **Blake Lively**) who are separated for the first time one summer.

Their friendship is sustained by a pair of jeans that "travels" from Greece to Mexico to North Carolina, and back to Maryland. Each girl wears it for a week, then ships it to the next friend.

This connects the girls and helps them summon up the strength to face the challenges that come their way, especially when they feel like losers.

Meanwhile, **Adam Sandler** and **Chris Rock** star in the hilarious comedy "The Longest Yard," about a former pro quarterback trying to make good in the toughest possible situation.

In the film, when former NFL player Paul Crewe (Sandler) is sent to prison, the warden forces him to transform a diverse group of inmates into a football team. Unlikely teammates, the convicts unite when they find out that they're playing against the prison guards.

With the help of fellow inmates Nate (**Burt Reynolds**) and Caretaker (Rock), Crewe promises the underdog cons a chance to exact revenge in a bone-crushing showdown where anything goes.

Peter Segal directs this new take on the original 1974 film hit.

Finally, fresh from his charming performance in "The Wedding Date," **Dermot Mulroney** now vies for the affection of **Diane Lane** in the new romantic comedy, "Must Love Dogs."

Mulroney plays Bob Connor, an easygoing single father. He meets Sarah (Lane) at school, where she teaches his son. Even though she's in the caregiver role, Bob sees that she's the one in need of attention and caring.

Sarah is a divorcee who has sworn off dating after a bad breakup, but her family pushes her back into the dating circuit.

Her sister places a personal ad for her, declaring that anyone answering it "must love dogs"—despite the fact that Sarah doesn't have a dog.

When someone intriguing responds to the ad, she decides to borrow her brother's dog—and plunges in.

More exceptional films on TV

TOMORROW, 9:30 a.m., Cinemax, "Deconstructing Sarah." Sarah, a beautiful Los Angels advertising executive appears to be normal, but at night she becomes Ruth, a nymphomaniac. Stars **Sheila Kelley** and **Rachel Ticotin**.

Aug. 11, 5 p.m., Cinemax, "Ghosts of Mississippi." In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was murdered in his own driveway. For over 30 years, his assassin remained free. Stars **Alex Baldwin, Whoopi Goldberg** and **James Woods**.

Aug. 11, 9:30 a.m., Cinemax, "Helen of Troy." The Trojans forget to beware of gift-bearing Greeks in this 1956 adventure epic about the war between two nationals over a kidnapped woman. Stars **Rossana Podesta, Jacques Sernas** and **Cedric Hardwicke**.

'House' on AXN

"HOUSE," a new medical drama about a medical genius, will be telecast on AXN every Tuesday at 10 p.m., starting Aug. 16.

Executive-produced by **Bryan Singer** ("X-Men"), "House" takes on mysteries where the villain is a medical malady, and the hero, Dr. Gregory House, is an irreverent, controversial doctor who trusts no one, least of all his patients.

The fun starts when House unravels the medical clues, ala Sherlock Holmes. In the pilot episode directed by Singer, a younger woman collapses from convulsions for no apparent reason, leaving her doctors perplexed. But House plays detective and finds the answer to the mystery in the patient's apartment.

'Side A Gig'

VIVA Records has released "Side A Gig—All Hits Live," which showcases the band's most performed songs at its concerts and guest performance stints. The album launch is set at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 13 at the Galleria Trade Hall, at the fourth level of Robinsons Galleria.

Cuts include "All I Need," "Next of Mine," "Sailing," "Faithfully," "Whenever I Call You Friend," "Wild World," "Stormy," "Rosanna," "Rainbow's End," "Later," "Our Love," "Don't Wanna Miss A Thing" and "The Queen Medley."

MTV nominees

THE COMPLETE list:

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

Favorite New Artist
Hale, Juan Pablo Dream, Kitchie Nadal, Kjwan, Urbandub.

Favorite Female Artist
Arnee, Kitchie Nadal, Kyla, Nina, Rachelle An Go.

Favorite Male Artist
Artstrong, Christian Bautista, Erik Santos, Luke Mejares, Paolo Santos.

Favorite Group
Bamboo, Radioactive Sago Project, Rivermaya, Session Road, Sugarfree.

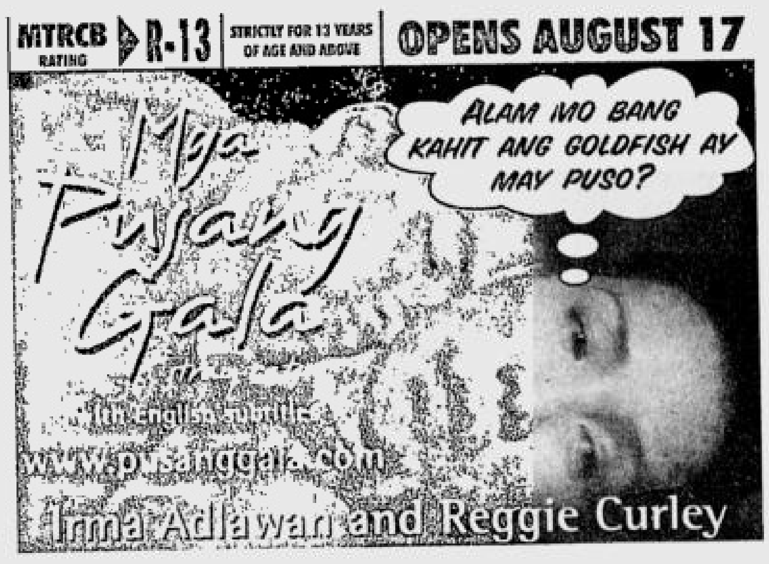
Favorite Song
"Balisong," Rivermaya; "Hari ng Sablay," Sugarfree; "Huwag na Huwag Mong Sasabihin," Kitchie Nadal; "Itsumo," Dice & K9; "Two Trick Pony," Sandwich.

JURY AWARDS

Best Indie Video
"Epekto," Monsterbot; "Forever Young," Valley of Chrome; "Just Like a Splendid Love Song," Orange and Lemons; "Nice Place," Juan Pablo Dream; "Song No. 9," Drip.

Best Director
Boom Dayupay, Artstrong's "Jazzy Monday"; Diego Castillo, Cambio's "DV"; Marie Jamora, Kjwan's "Daliri"; Pedring Lopez, Rivermaya's "You'll Be Safe Here"; RA Rivera, Radioactive Sago Project's "Astro."

Best Video
"Astro," Radioactive Sago Project; "Daliri," Kjwan; "DV," Cambio; "Jazzy Monday," Artstrong; "You'll Be Safe Here," Rivermaya.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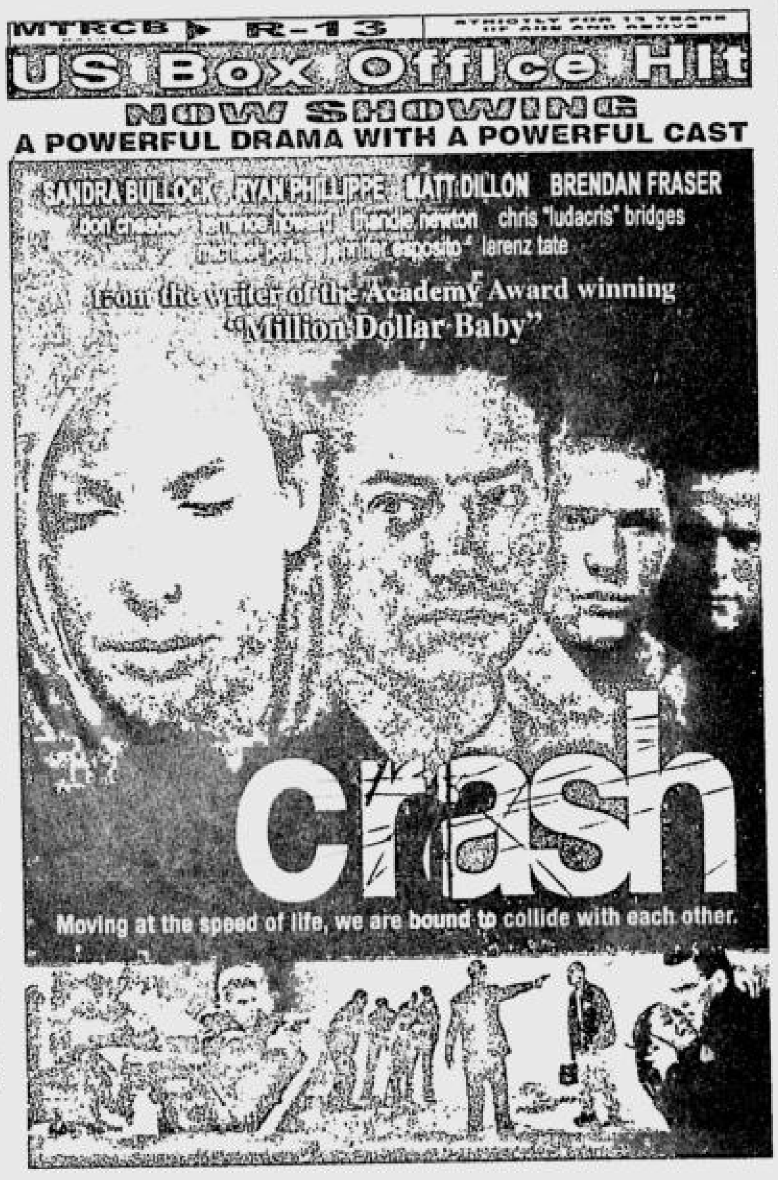
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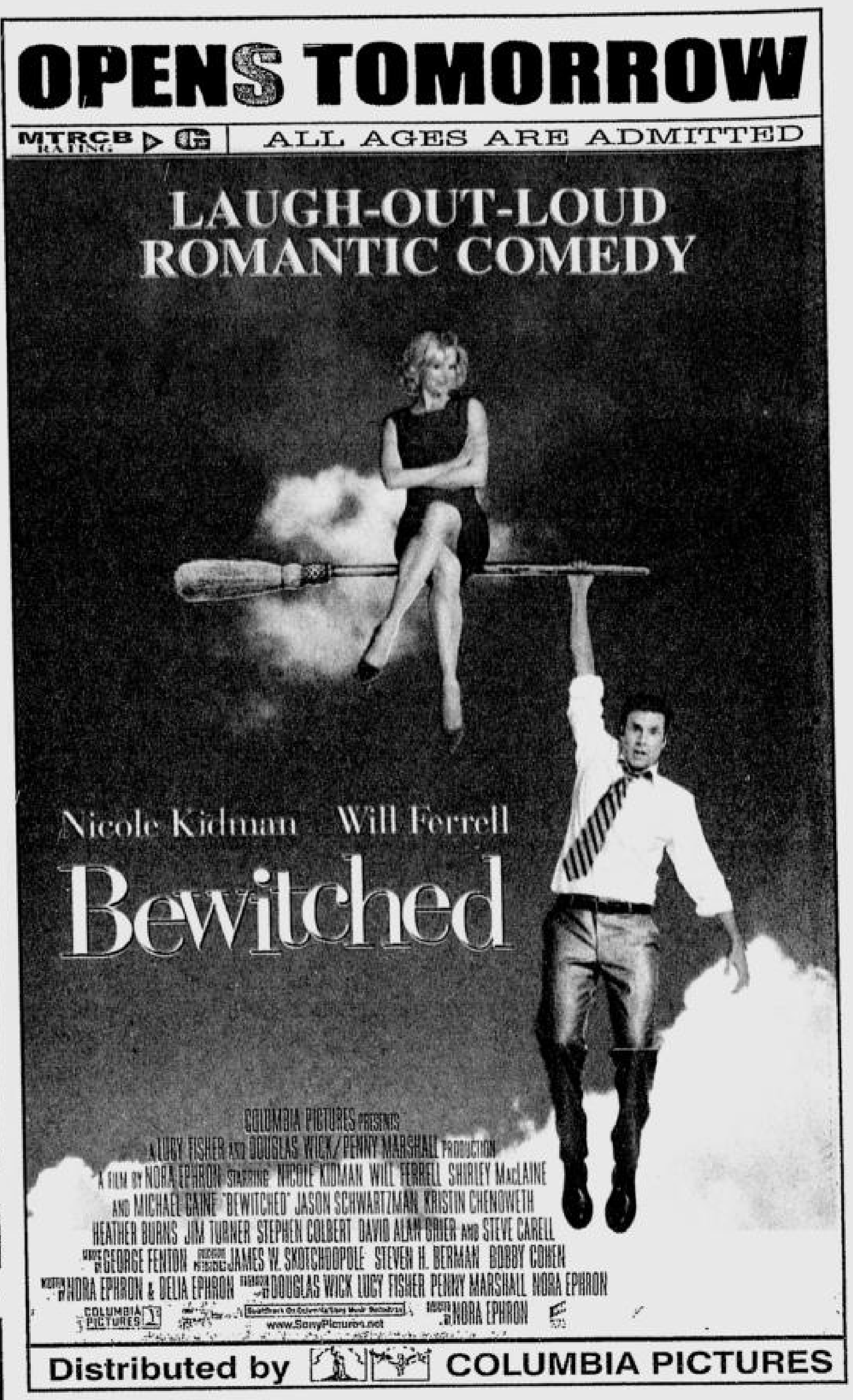
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Voting on for MTV Awards

MTV VJ Don Puno

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

A PARTY crowd of musicians, record executives, band managers, writers, filmmakers and various guests attended the media launch of the 2005 MTV Pilipinas Music Video Awards held recently at Capone's Bistro in Makati.

A visually engaging, wisecracking program preceded the announcement of 40 nominees in eight categories.

Riding on the theme "A Night at the Boxing Ring," MTV VJs KC Montero, Marc Abaya, John Joe Joseph, Colby Miller and Don Puno suited up in boxer's training gear. Mariel Rodriguez and Nicole Fonacier paraded in eye-popping outfits as round girls, but the heavily built Claire Olivar didn't have much choice but to slip into a cheerleader's jacket. Cindy Kurleto wore a bow tie as ring announcer.

The VJs harped on the idea that the awards night, set Aug. 25 at the Araneta Coliseum, will be a musical slugfest, since most of the nominees were considered heavyweights in the contemporary OPM scene.

Two sets

The MTV Video Music Awards is divided into People's Choice and Jury Awards.

For the People's Choice awards, viewers may vote for their: Favorite New Artist, Favorite Female Artist, Favorite Male Artist, Favorite Group and Favorite Song. There are four ways to vote: SMS (text VOTE to 688 only for Smart subscribers), e-mail (mtvpilipinas05@mtv-asia.com), online (www.pinoyexchange.com/mtv), or through ballots inside the August issue of MTV Ink. Votes will be accepted till Aug. 21.

A committee of musicians, journalists, filmmakers, artists, photographers, fashionistas and advertising executives will decide on three Jury awards: Best Indie Video, Best Director and Best Video.

Rivermaya leads all contenders with four nominations, while Artstrong, Kitchie Nadal, Kjwan and Radioactive Sago Project each got three nominations.

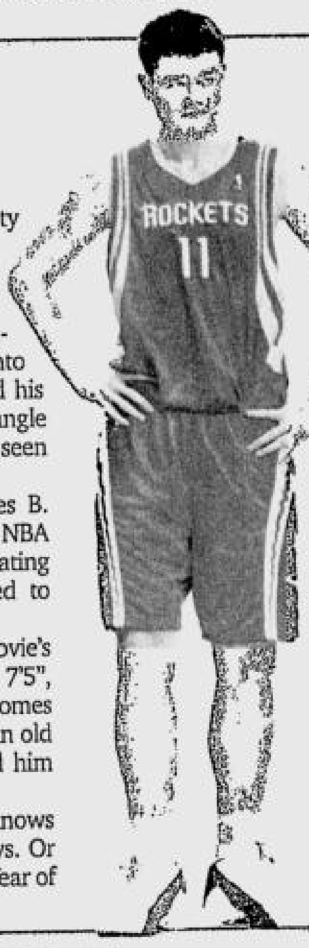
As the nominees were presented on a video screen, the loudest cheers went to Hale and Juan Pablo Dream, both for Best New Artist; Rivermaya for Favorite Song ("Balisong"), Sugarfree for Favorite Group and Favorite Song, and Radioactive Sago Project for Favorite Group, Best Video and Best Director (RA Rivera).

Sugarfree played a scorching, much applauded live set followed by Rivermaya, as cameras clicked away to document the arrival of music celebrities. When Christian Bautista was called onstage, VJ Marc started teasing VJ Nicole who apparently had a crush on the dashing pop champ.

The party was still in full swing when we left before midnight.

(List of nominees on page A23)

REVIEW Yes, yes, Yao



By Francis Ochoa

THE BOWED head, intimidating scowl and confident stride as he crossed the cobbled walkway of the athletes' village in Busan, South Korea, in 2002 is a familiar picture to those who know Asian hoops. It is Yao Ming, Chinese cage superstar.

The charming smile, wide-eyed look and puzzled expression that "The Year of the Yao" pasted on movie screens belong to the same person—well, almost.

The movie attempts to paint a picture of Yao, the man.

But other than highlight his evolution from one country's champ to another's underdog, "Year" presents nothing new about the Houston Rockets' prized giant. At least, nothing that ESPN couldn't cram into a 30-minute special.

In any case, everything that happened during Yap's rookie year is in here:

- His rivalry with Shaquille O'Neal.
- The wager that had Charles Barkley kissing a donkey's ass on national television.
- The pressures of playing for a city that had won two championships riding on the shoulders of another center, NBA hall-of-famer Hakeem Olajuwon.

Trying to go beyond what people already know, the movie offers a peek into the special friendship between Yao and his personal interpreter Colin Pine—an angle relentlessly pursued. In fact, the docu is seen mostly through the eyes of Pine.

Directors Adam Del Deo and James B. Stern make good use of their access to NBA games and Yao's private space, decorating their work with game clips calculated to make any basketball fan drool.

Aficionados may wonder at the movie's insistence on pinning Yao's height at 7'5", when he is actually 7'6". The mix-up comes from the fact that the NBA picked up an old data sheet of Yao, one which still had him listed an inch shorter.

Nowadays, though, everybody knows how tall Yao really is. Or how he plays. Or what products he has endorsed. "The Year of the Yao" is a couple of years too late.

ROUNDUP

Dismissed

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has dismissed the copyright infringement case filed by ABS-CBN against GMA 7 for the latter's "unauthorized" use of an "exclusive" footage last year.

In a resolution dated Aug. 1, the DOJ said GMA 7 did not violate the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines when it aired the arrival of truck driver De la Cruz on July 22, 2004, following his release by terrorists.

The Kapuso network said the footage it used had come from Reuters and CNN, of which it is a subscriber.

The resolution quoted the Intellectual Property Code: "The making of ephemeral recordings by a broadcasting organization by means of its own facilities for use in its own broadcast is not [an] infringement of copyright." *Marinel R. Cruz*

Passion in Sydney

SYDNEY—Hollywood actor-director Mel Gibson has been asked to recreate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in the streets of Sydney if the city is selected to host a major Catholic gathering, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The staging would be part of the city's bid to secure the Catholic Church's World Youth Day in 2008, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

AP

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7 GOLD (DOLBY) THE ISLAND
8 D' ANOTHERS
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10 ARAHAN

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5 SOON TO OPEN

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3 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
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2 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
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2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 (DTS) EVIL DEAD
4 SA PAGITAN NG LANGIT
5 D' ANOTHERS

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2 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
3 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
4 D' ANOTHERS

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YEAR OF THE YAO 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
CRASH 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20
EYE INFINITY 12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00
STEALTH 2:10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9:40
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 1.35 / 4.05 / 6.35 STEALTH 9:00
D' ANOTHERS 12:30 / 2:45 / 5.00 / 7:15 / 9:30
IF ONLY 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:30 / 7:45 / 10:00
WEDDING CRASHERS 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20
THE ISLAND 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ D' ANOTHERS 11:25 / 1:40 / 3:55 / 6:10 / 8:25
❷ YEAR OF THE YAO 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
❸ CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY 12:00 / 2:30 / 5:00 / 7:30
❹ ARAHAN 1:15 / 3:45 / 6:15 / 8:45
❺ STEALTH 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
FUNK FEST! PAROKYA NI EDGAR CONCERT August 12, Friday, 7 pm
UAAP - NCAA ALL STAR GAMES August 13, Saturday
MTV PILIPINAS 2005 AWARDS August 25 Thursday 8 pm
CUSA BASKETBALL LEAGUE August 26, Friday OPENING GAMES

CENTER EVENTS
SALE EVENTS: Marks & Spencer at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall, Freeway at the Ground Floor of Ali Mall, and Oxygen at the 2nd Floor of Farmers Plaza
EXHIBIT: DMC Display ongoing until August 12 at the LRT Concourse Area on Level 2 of Gateway Mall
PERFORMANCES: Cool Live Jazz at the Gateway Courtyard from 9 to 11pm featuring Mishka Adams & The Blue Echoes on August 12 and Brass Munkeys on August 13
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INDICATORS

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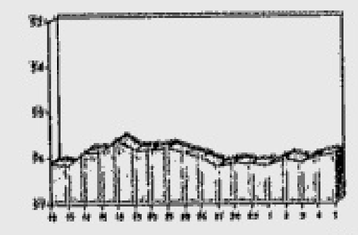

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱55.910= $1
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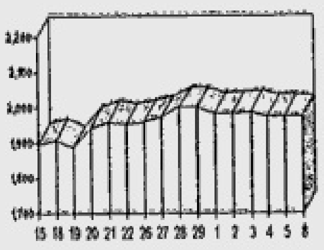
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 5, 2005

GOLD: $437.70-438.20
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 5, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares close flat



SHARE prices closed flat yesterday as the market continued to consolidate amid a lack of fresh leads, dealers said.

Profit-taking in companies that have released their first-half results offset gains in banking stocks and in counters that have yet to report their results, they said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index edged 0.77 point down to 1,974.83. It traded between 1,970.94 and 1,984.01.

Turnover reached 466.38 million shares worth P1.03 billion.

The broader all-shares index advanced 2.86 points to 1,197.11.

Gainers outnumbered losers 39 to 31, with 37 stocks ending unchanged.

The Philippine peso averaged 56.03 to the dollar at the close of trading at the stock exchange.

"Recent corporate developments, as well as good interim results for the first half, have inspired some buying. But we're still in a consolidation mode. The index has been trading within a tight range," said Oliver Plana of Asiasec Equities.

Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com said: "Some people are speculating as to which banks will move next." On Friday, the government and tycoon Lucio Tan are set to auction a substantial stake in Philippine National Bank.

AFP

Gas-fed taxis start plying major cities

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy is working on a policy framework to expand the use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), chiefly used for cooking, as a transport fuel.

Coming off consultations with industry stakeholders in Cebu early last month, DOE Energy Utilization and Management Bureau director Teresita Borra said in an internal memo that one of the items raised during the open forum was the "need to establish a policy framework and identify the specific government agency that will regulate the different components of the autogas program implementation."

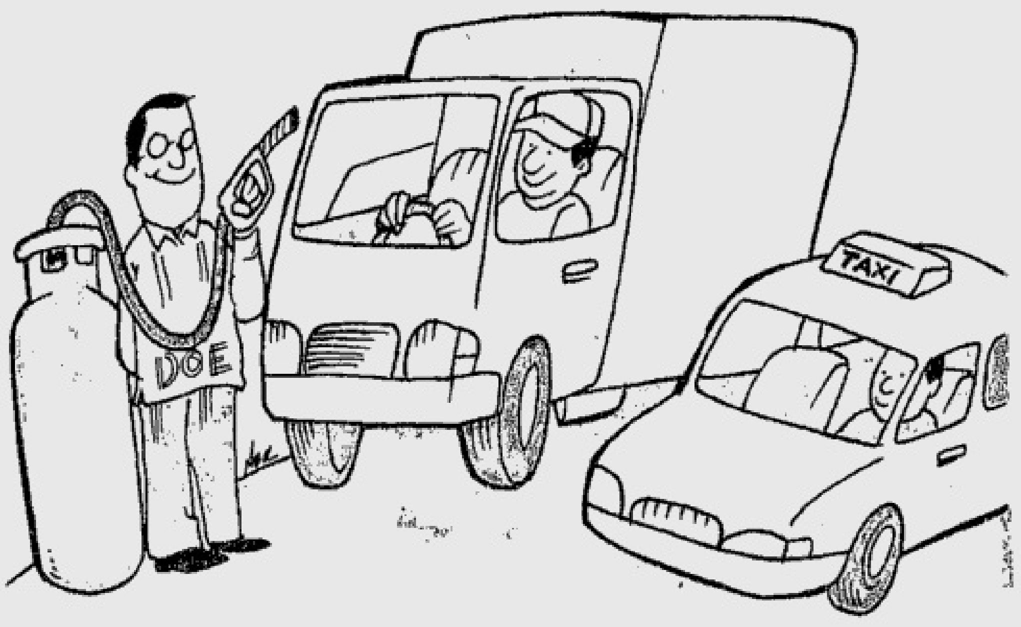
These components include registration categories of autogas vehicles as well as safety regulation and certification of vehicle conversion.

Industry stakeholders also raised the need for capacity building, particularly involving government agencies and local government units on the use of LPG as a transport fuel, autogas technology and the various components of the autogas program.

A study of the economic benefits and safety of using autogas for private trucks and vehicles in Cebu City was also suggested.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said in an interview that it took around

GOV'T/ B3



T-bill rates up slightly; 91-day yield at 5.622%

By Michelle V. Remo

TREASURY bill rates inched up slightly across all maturities yesterday, reversing the previous week's decline as the market adopted a wait-and-see attitude toward expected developments on the fiscal front.

The bellwether 91-day rate posted a negligible 3.3-basis-point increase to 5.622 percent. The 182- and the 364-day securities likewise fetched slightly higher rates of 7.455 percent and 8.433 percent. The six-month rate was up by 6 basis points, while the one-year yield was higher by 3.6 basis points.

"The rates moved sideways. But we can see a shift in favor of the longer term (364-day bill)," said National Treasurer Omar Cruz. The high volume of bids for the one-year bill indicated the return of confidence of investors on the government's fiscal prospects.

Bids for the 364-day bills reached P5.75 billion, almost three times higher than the government's offering of P2 billion for each maturity.

There was also appetite for the 91- and the 182-day bills as volume of bids reached P3.48 billion and P4.11 billion.

The over-subscription was an indication that the market was still awash with cash as banks preferred to invest more of their money in government securities rather than lend these to enterprises.

Cruz said the market was awaiting the decision of the Supreme Court on the fate of the expanded value-added tax law, considered the main revenue-raising measure of the Arroyo administration.

The high tribunal issued a temporary restraining order on the VAT following petitions by opposition lawmakers and petroleum dealers who questioned its constitutionality. The Supreme Court is expected to issued a decision this month, and economic officials said there was a good chance the high court would decide in favor of the administration.

The implementation of the VAT is expected to help government bring its budget deficit below the official target of P180 billion.

Cruz said the improving fiscal situation of the government was enough reason to push through with the much-delayed roadshow in September. The roadshow, originally scheduled in June, was deferred due to the political chaos resulting from the scandals hounding the Arroyo administration.

The roadshow is intended to update foreign investors from Europe and the United States on developments in the Philippine's fiscal sector.

PNB bidding to push through on Friday

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PUBLIC bidding for a 67-percent stake in Philippine National Bank will push through this Friday despite questions involving a P3-billion sugar crop loan portfolio raised by a group of Bacolod sugar planters.

PNB closed yesterday at P46.50 a share at the Philippine Stock Exchange, up by 1.1 percent from Friday's closing of 46, benefiting from some excitement ahead of Friday's bidding.

"The bidding will push through on Aug. 12," Finance Undersecretary for privatization Jay Singson said yesterday.

The auction is the biggest privatization initiative by the government since 1997 when it sold to Hong Kong's First Pacific group the right to develop the sprawling Fort Bonifacio military camp in Taguig. The floor price for the PNB bidding was set at P43 a share.

PNB said its privatization should not be hampered by allegations of a "sweetheart deal" surrounding the sugar crop loans assumed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In a statement, the bank assured that the P3-billion dacion en pago (payment-in-kind) arrangement it

PNB/ B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

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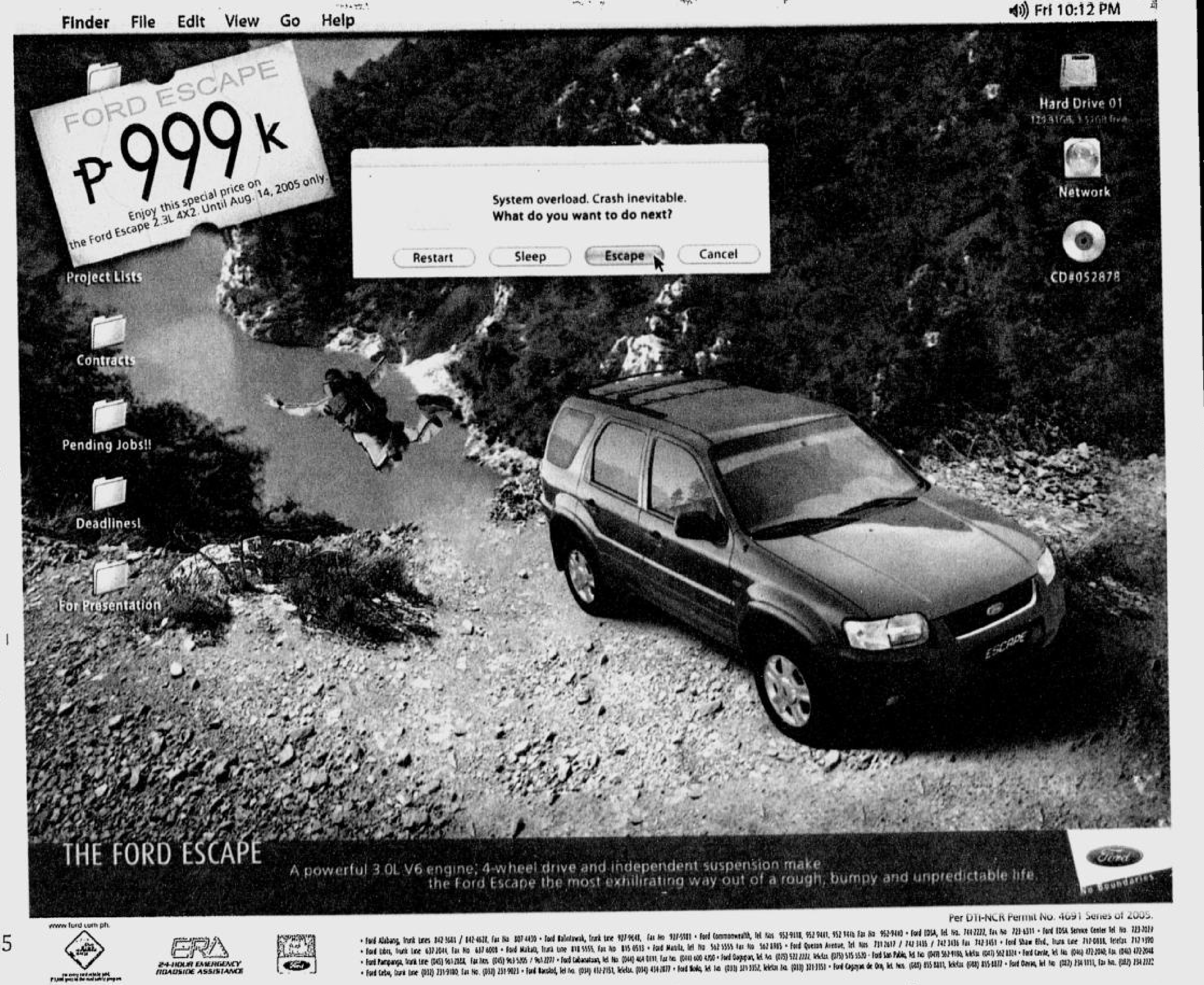

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PSE index jumps 22% in 1st half

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE STOCK market in the first half of the year managed to sustain its buoyancy amid the political turmoil involving President Macapagal-Arroyo that threatened to derail her economic programs.

Philippine Stock Exchange president Francis Lim however noted that issues in the political arena and other factors stopped the market from fully taking off.

"Had it not been for the anti-market forces that occurred in the latter part of the semester, such as the Supreme Court temporary restraining order against the VAT law, the record-high crude oil prices and the downgrade [of] our credit-worthiness, the stock market would have surged to beyond the 2100-mark," Lim said yesterday. "I am glad that the market is still holding up despite these negative developments. It just goes to show that the country has good economic fundamentals, which investors pay more attention to."

The PSE composite index climbed 21.83 percent to 1,924.23 points as of end-June from 1,579.40 during the same period last year, Lim said.

Trading value was exceptional during the first six months of 2005, surging 151.90 percent to P223.19 billion from the P88.60 billion of the previous year ago.

The mining sector was the biggest gainer, soaring 5,617.43 percent to P12.87 billion in the first half from only P225.12 million a year ago.

This was followed by the oil sector, leaping 913.13 percent to P600.99 million from P59.32 million. The banking and financial sector was also up by 163.61 percent to P28.75 billion in the first half from P10.91 billion.

The commercial and industrial sector soared 146.17 percent to P159.16 billion in the first semester from P64.66 billion.

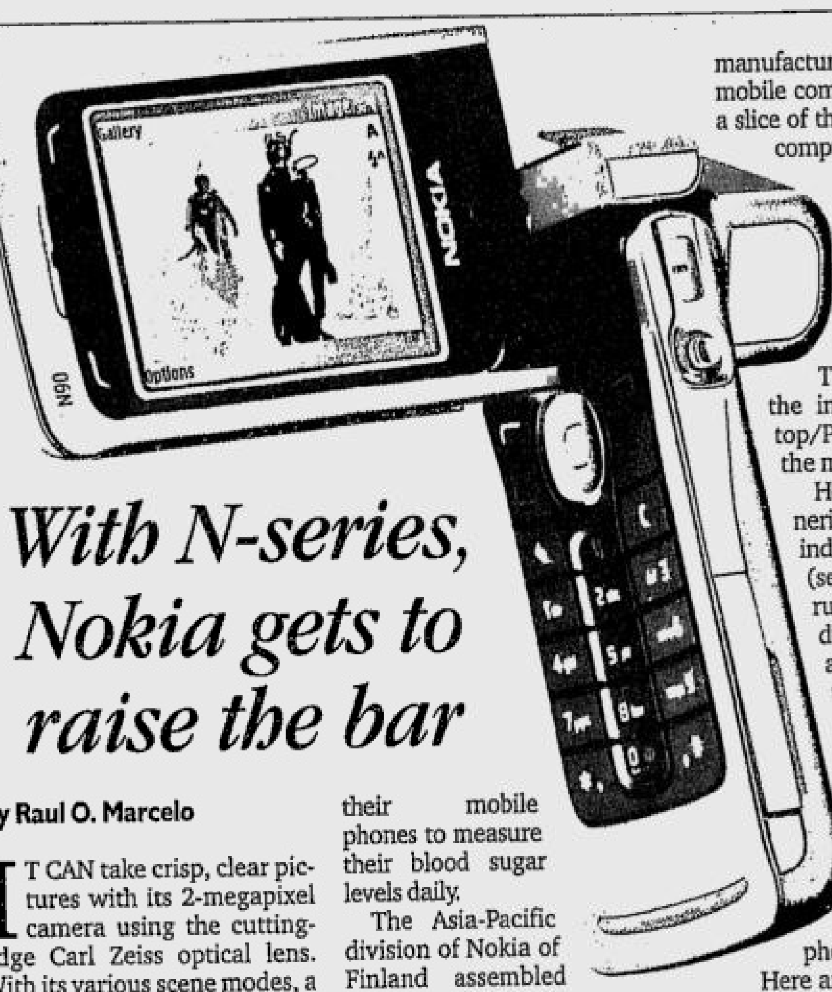
The property sector rose by 70.63 percent to P21.77 billion from P12.76 billion.

"Foreign investors still account for more than 50 percent of our market's value turnover," Lim said. "What this means is that foreigners pay more attention to the economic fundamentals rather than to the political noise happening in the country.

"It is my hope that the political drama will not eat up the gains that have been achieved because that will adversely affect the market."

In terms of value turnover, the commercial and industrial sector grabbed the biggest share at 71.3 percent.

From January to June, volume of shares traded totaled 243.09 billion, more than triple the 65.76 billion shares it registered in the same period last year.



With N-series, Nokia gets to raise the bar

By Raul O. Marcelo

IT CAN take crisp, clear pictures with its 2-megapixel camera using the cutting-edge Carl Zeiss optical lens. With its various scene modes, a built-in flash, 20-times digital zoom, and PictBridge capability (direct connection to printers), it's a truly compact digicam.

Yet it can also store a thousand MP3 songs with its 4 gigabytes of memory, with access from a host of other digital devices as easy as the drag-and-drop mode, and then play these with dedicated music keys using top-of-the-line audio technology from Sennheiser, JVC and Bose.

It's a fusion of something like a mid-level Sony or Canon digicam and the best-selling Apple iPod Mini. But, it's made by Nokia.

Dubbed the new generation of multimedia products from the world's leading mobile technology firm, it can be used to make phone calls, send text messages and do the usual web-surfing activities as well. It remains, at its core, a cellular phone.

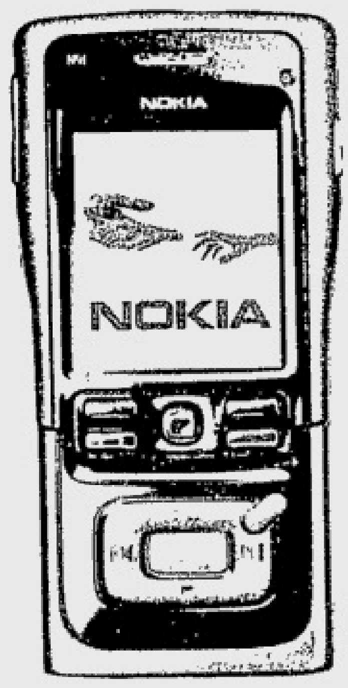
These N-series handhelds by Nokia, scheduled to be out in the global market beginning this month, have shown how far—and how fast—mobile technology has progressed. Barely a decade ago, cellular phones offered just the basic telephony service of making and receiving calls, with the popular short messaging service (SMS) or "texting" simply an added feature. Ten years from now, perhaps sooner, mobile phones can go as far as including some health care features. For instance, diabetic people may use their mobile phones to measure their blood sugar levels daily.

The Asia-Pacific division of Nokia of Finland assembled journalists from the region in Singapore last week for a one-day briefing on the latest developments in the mobile telecom sector and what has been keeping the company busy lately.

Nokia executives are ecstatic about how more and more people are using their mobile phones for multimedia—not just for communication, but also for entertainment (streamed video, music and games), and for news and information services.

They say this has made Nokia seek new uses for the handheld. Nokia, the brand used by one out of every three mobile phone users worldwide, just sold last month its one billionth cellular unit.

After grabbing market share from digicam and MP3 player manufacturers, Nokia and other mobile companies are targeting a slice of the burgeoning laptop computer sector.



Tyler McGee, vice president handling customer and market operations in the Asia Pacific region, says Nokia is working on mobile TV broadcasting and the incorporation of laptop/PC capabilities into the mobile handsets.

He says Nokia is partnering with hundreds of independent developers (see www.forum.nokia.com) to produce innovative mobile applications and content for mobile phone users. These range from gaming to music and to personal productivity such as providing maps, dictionaries and world traveler help directly to mobile phones.

Here are just two of the hundred or so innovations that may interest Philippine mobile customers, though these won't be around in this part of the Nokia world in the next year or so.

- Visual Radio: Developed by Nokia, Visual Radio streams content from broadcasters' individual radio shows to a mobile phone. When users connect to a Visual Radio channel via GPRS services, they hear the radio program and see relevant content as well—the song and artist currently playing, graphics and background data for sports, weather or classical music broadcasts. However, Visual Radio is dependent on mobile operators like Globe and Smart and radio stations being Visual Radio-enabled.
- Mobile TV Broadcasting: Nokia aims to allow a mobile user to watch his or her favorite TV show, tune into news as it happens, or catch the latest sports events—all on the mobile phone—indoors, outdoors or even while traveling. It is pilot-testing in several key cities worldwide the so-called digital video broadcasting handheld or DVB-H technology for this undertaking.

It will not be surprising that in a few years time, Nokia will have achieved what it set out to do—for mobile phone users to "experience the freedom of wireless communication." But a word of caution: be wary of the cost of such "freedom," mobile service rates around here are not that cheap. Go check your bills.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 8, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	2,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	32.5	32	32	485,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50	50	49	49	2,221,800
China Banking Corp.	775	775	775	775	1,000
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.63	0.6	0.61	6,340,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54	54.5	53.5	53.5	3,956,000
International Exch. Bank	19	19.5	19	19.5	96,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27.5	27.5	567,800
Philippine National Bank	46.5	47	46.5	46.5	57,500
Phil. Savings Bank	32	33	32	33	2,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	14	13	14	80,000
Security Bank Corp.	32	34.5	32	34.5	1,011,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	31	31.5	31	31.5	35,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2900	2900	2820	2820	130
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	12,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	142	142	142	142	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2070	2070	2030	2030	530
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	13,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1	1.04	1	1.02	3,830,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	810	810	800	800	16,370
Ipeople Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	26,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	2,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2	2	2	2	34,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	5,134,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1615	1630	1615	1620	143,210
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	5,100,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	7,500
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	25	24.75	24.75	47,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.5	1,854,000
Petron Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	574,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	56,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	237,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.5	0.52	0.5	0.5	2,090,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3	3	3	3	159,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	20,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	2,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31	31.5	31	31	22,400
RFM Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	20,000
San Miguel Corp. A	69	69.5	69	69.5	109,000
San Miguel Corp. B	99.5	99.5	99	99.5	28,600
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16.75	16	16.75	388,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	13,000,000
Ayala Corp.	300	307.5	300	307.5	187,190
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.57	470,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	55,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	8,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2	2	1.98	1.98	213,000
APC Group Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	430,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	290,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.82	70,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10	10	28,500
Banpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.1	2,725,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.9	1,071,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	425,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.2	870,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43.5	43.5	43	43	59,000
Ionics Inc.	1.26	1.34	1.26	1.34	50,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	13	13	13	13	900
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.45	612,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.84	35,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	2,570,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,220,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	400,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	33,000
SM Investments Corp.	222	226	222	226	833,290
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	90,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.58	1.68	1.58	1.6	222,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	600,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	16,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.95	0.96	0.94	0.94	3,490,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.5	265,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	11	11	11	11	9,600
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	5,000
Far Eastern University	515	515	515	515	90
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.2	8.4	8.2	8.2	1,673,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.89	0.91	0.89	0.91	140,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	70,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	3,190,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	717,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	10,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	240,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	390,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.18	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	3,254,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.99	0.99	0.9	0.9	400,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	10,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	111,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.85	4.95	4.85	4.9	105,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	2,330,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	180,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	280,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.91	0.94	0.9	0.91	1,670,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28.5	28	28.5	224,300
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	70,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	60,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.95	3.85	3.85	568,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	2,200,000

CURRENCIES

August 8, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.809323	1.000000	55.9290
Japan	Yen	0.007230	0.008933	0.4996
United Kingdom	Pound	1.439220	1.778300	99.4585
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104141	0.128677	7.1968
Switzerland	Franc	0.641099	0.792142	44.3037
Canada	Dollar	0.665507	0.822301	45.9905
Singapore	Dollar	0.489461	0.604778	33.8246
Australia	Dollar	0.620504	0.766695	42.8805
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.146803	2.652590	148.3567
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215820	0.266667	14.9144
Brunei	Dollar	0.487985	0.602954	33.7226
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000103	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.019654	0.024284	1.3582
UAE	Dirham	0.220362	0.272279	15.2283
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.235600	69.1059
Argentina	Peso	0.282733	0.349345	19.5385
Brazil	Real	0.352723	0.435825	24.3753
Denmark	Kroner	0.134018	0.165593	9.2615
India	Rupee	0.018640	0.023031	1.2881
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215791	0.266631	14.9124
Mexico	New Peso	0.076363	0.094354	5.2771
New Zealand	Dollar	0.557385	0.688705	38.5186
Norway	Kroner	0.126704	0.156556	8.7560
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013580	0.016779	0.9384
South Africa	Rand	0.125545	0.155123	8.6759
Korea	Won	0.000796	0.000984	0.0550
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025476	0.031478	1.7605

Fear and square

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AT THE minimum price set by this cute administration for majority control of semi-government Philippine National Bank, Lucio Tan must be ready to lose money—a lot of money, by the billions of pesos.

As everybody knows, except the movie stars in Congress, the tobacco magnate became a partner of the government in PNB, when he bought into the bank through its stock rights offering during the time of the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

Today, as the government prepares to bow out of the bank, PNB shares are valued at P43 a share, and unfortunately for Lucio Tan, he bought his holdings in the bank at roughly three times more that amount.

Yet at that time he acquired the stocks, he got all sorts of flak from the polite crowd. As a result, the Wrist Band administration forced him to agree to sell his holdings together with that of the government under the privatization program.

Thus, Lucio Tan is now selling his interest in PNB, so that the government can offer to sell majority control of the bank. Supposedly, the strategy should help the government command a good price for the bank, fair and square.

So is that the good price—that valuation of P43 a share? Sure, the strategy is working fine!

***

ENTER the sugar sector.

Last week, fearing that they would all lose their livelihood, a group of sugar planters tried to square off with this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

They said the Palace should stop the auction of the majority bloc in PNB, because it could be the subject later of court cases for being "disadvantageous to the government.

They claimed that at that minimum bid price of P43 a share, the bank is undervalued. They said the price did not consider a windfall for the buyer.

Actually, the so-called windfall has something to do with a top-secret deal between PNB and Bangko Sentral.

The two government entities even signed a top-secret memorandum of agreement, known in bureaucratic parlance as MOA.

The MOA cropped up in 1997 during the term of former Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel Singson, but before the time of Wrist Band.

Because of the MOA, according to our sources in the sugar sector, the buyer of PNB stands to get billions of pesos in windfall in just eight years from now.

Obviously, at least to that group of sugar planters, the minimum selling price of PNB does not take that MOA into account. At P43 a share, the bank is a steal.

***

IT ALL started in 1992, as the government passed a restitution law for the sugar industry, as a way to rehabilitate the industry from the "plunder" under the martial regime.

Part of the "restitution" involved the loans of some 4,000 sugar farm owners with the now bankrupt Republic Planters Bank.

That was one of the two banks that the group of the late Roberto Benedicto used in the sugar-trading monopoly under the martial regime.

As another, well, "favor" to the Benedicto group, the defunct Central Bank at that time opened a rediscounting window to RPB for its loans to the sugar sector.

In effect, RPB lent money to the sugar planters, and then it turned around to the Central Bank to get its money back. Yes, buntis, the money came from the government!

Unfortunately, because of the low price for sugar that the Benedicto group paid for the produce of the sugar farms, the RPB borrowers failed to pay back their loans.

RPB therefore also could not pay back its loans from the Central Bank. When the martial regime ended, RPB went bankrupt.

The state-owned PNB then absorbed the problematic RPB, including the accounts of those 4,000 sugar planters.

And so in 1997, the new and improved Bangko Sentral entered into the top-secret MOA with PNB involving those accounts. It was a multi-billion peso MOA.

***

ACCORDING to the sugar group, the total exposure of the Bangko Sentral to those loans amounted to P3 billion in 1997.

Under the top-secret MOA, the Bangko Sentral authorized PNB to collect on those loans, but no longer for account of PNB, but for Bangko Sentral.

In short, PNB became just the collector. For a fee, of course! Well, if you believe that group of sugar planters, for a handsome fee!

You see, under the MOA, by year 2013, or only eight years from now, all PNB has to do is pay back Bangko Sentral that P3-billion exposure in those sugar loans.

Whatever extra the PNB gets on top of the P3 billion will belong to PNB. This is the "windfall" that the group of sugar planters talked about, something that was not considered in the pricing for the PNB shares.

One sugar planter, for instance, has an outstanding account (i.e. the rediscounted amount) of P1.7 million, based on Bangko Sentral records.

An inquiry with the PNB showed that, to get back his farm titles that were used as collateral, he must pay PNB for that P1.7-million Bangko Sentral account, only an amazing sum of P8 million.

By extrapolation, the group of sugar planters claim that the total P3-billion Bangko Sentral exposure could yield for PNB at least P20 billion.

That kind of windfall! And it takes place in only eight years!

PNB bidding . . .

From page B1

made with the BSP covering sugar crop loans in 1994 was "fair, transparent and above board."

A group called "Planters Against the Plunder of the Sugar Industry (PAPSI)" earlier asked the Department of Finance to postpone the Aug. 12 bidding, citing the "anomalous" and "grossly disadvantageous" deals allowing the bank to buy back by 2013 more than 4,000 collateralized loans to sugar farmers earlier surrendered to the BSP.

PNB president and chief executive Omar Byron Mier said: "There are no discriminatory provisions in the documents covering the agreement; PNB and the BSP have been transparent regarding the provisions of the MOA (memorandum of agreement) as well as the way these are being implemented."

Mier added that "the loans of the sugar clients are supported by duly executed documents spelling out specific terms and conditions mutually accepted by all parties concerned."

The loans are agricultural sugar crop loans granted by Republic Planters Bank in the 1980s. RPB was then the primary lending government bank of the sugar industry.

In 1991, through a bidding, RPB was privatized and became a PNB subsidiary known as PNB-RB. In 1998, PNB-RB was sold to Maybank, and PNB assumed the sugar loans under the MOA.

"We are moving on the loan settlement arrangement the way it had been legally provided for by Republic Act 7202," Mier said.

RA 7202 is the Restitution Law, which sought to make up for the losses suffered by sugar producers due to actions taken by government agencies by reviving the economy in sugar-producing areas.

A Greek tragedy

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I WATCHED Zuce this week on my wide TV screen. He was not testy even though he was testifying. He has certainly put on weight since he last appeared 3,000 years ago as the great Greek god Zeus. He used to destroy his enemies with bolts of lightning but now uses lasers. Some people thought he was AC/DC but in fact, he was a great womanizer. His wife Persephone was very jealous and named one of her children Telephone. Their first son, Herpes, was a genitalman, much loved by women.

The Greek myths were first written by Homer, who wrote the Iliad, the Odyssey and Homer Loan 1, 2 and 3. He also wrote about Hades, who rowed the dead across the river Styx and for some reason this sticks in my memory. He was the soul proprietor but he made a messopatamia and ended up as Mickey Mouse's dog, Pluto. Mars fared even worse. He ended up as a chocolate bar.

Poseidon a.k.a. Neptune was the king of the sea. He is credited with having invented chess and his opening move was always prawn to king 4. There was also Bacchus but he was always whining so they made him the god of wine. Jason went in search of the Golden Fleas armed with Baygon. He was about to commit insecticide but they pleaded for mercy and he decided to let BAYGON be bygones.

Oedipus was very bad. He killed his father so that he could marry his mother. To distract him, she gave him a computer and he fell in love with the motherboard. He caught the Monica Lewinsky virus, which only attack laptops, and died. Then there was a gorgon named Zola, but he got cheesed off and went to Jeddah.

Helen loved Paris but he was killed and buried in a Parisite near a tower, which was quite an eyeful. I am babeling again. Agamemnon tried for years to capture Troy but without success. At last, he decided to troy once more and sent a Greek gift. They thought it was horseplay and let it enter, whereupon they suffered an arrowing defeat.

There was some character named Sissy Puss, who pushed rocks up a hill, only to find they rolled down again. Then he got a little boulder and got his rocks off. Many centuries later, the poet Milton wrote about shooting craps in Las Vegas in his famous poem, "Pair o'dice lost."

Besides the Greek and Roman gods, there were the Norse gods like Odin. Shakespeare wrote, "A Norse, a Norse, my kingdom for a Norse." I like Greek myths and I've had a few near Mrs.

* * *

CONGRESS is going to produce many more witnesses and this is likely to continue for weeks, months or even years. But it is all futile, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. They don't have the numbers so instead of going on and on, why don't they pass some tax reforms, which we badly need.

They could debate shifting to a parliamentary system as I have often suggested but again, they do not have the numbers. To change the Constitution, they need to get 18 of the 24 senatorial votes, but 14 senators are against the idea or are unconvinced. It is unlikely that they can persuade more than half to change their vote so I do not think that this is going anywhere either. I hope that FVR and JDV can persuade them but they have an uphill task just like Sisyphus.

On Wednesday, the National Statistics Office announced that they had understated the trade deficit by more than $3 billion each year. In 2002, it was said to be $218 million but was actually $4 billion; in 2003, it was not $1.3 billion but $4.2 billion and in 2004, and the figure of $713 million should have been $4.4 billion. So they understated the total by $10 billion. This is appalling, but it hardly made the newspapers. If you want to read these reports, they have been transferred to the fiction department next to Harry Potter.

On Wednesday, Globe reported an abysmal, worse-than-expected second quarter. Profits fell from P3 billion to P1.19 billion, a decline of 69 percent despite the addition of 670,000 new subscribers, half the rate of a year ago. Our Research Department expects things to get worse before they get better and have reduced the earnings per share from P85.50 to P64.90 in the current year. They continue to rate the stock as a SELL with a one-year target of P6.80. One reason for the reduced profits was that Globe has used up all its tax breaks.

The following day, PLDT came out with results much in line with expectations. For the first half, the net income rose from P13.8 billion last year to P15 billion, an increase of 9 percent. The net increase in subscribers was only 537,000 and at the analysts' briefing, the management warned that in the months ahead, there could be net disconnections. The dollar debt is being reduced by $600 million this year, thanks to the dividends from Smart and 2008 should see it eliminated. PLDT may increase its dividend to 40 percent of earnings this year and 50 percent next year. They want to bring the yield more into line with overseas telecoms. The stock continues to be rated as a BUY with a long-term target of P2,000 but I am less optimistic.

Research also maintained a BUY rating on Piltel. Net income in the first half before foreign exchange gains rose from P709 million to P4 billion with core earnings for the second half reaching P2.5 billion. This was due to the addition of 350,000 subscribers and the increase in the revenue split from 50 percent to 80 percent. Piltel still has P14.8 billion of tax losses, which should last for about another four years. They expect earnings to grow 10 percent next year and 14 percent the year after. With the shares on a P/E of 4.3, their long-term target is P5.

Banco de Oro bid P56.50 for the GO family's 25-percent stake. This will cost P10.8 billion and is the fifth acquisition that EPCI has made. The pension funds, SSS and GSIS, are willing to sell but only at their acquisition cost of P92 and P86 respectively. This would give BDO absolute control but I do not believe that they will pay such a high premium. WAIT AND SY. EPCI has more than 400 branches and the acquisition should be good for both banks. The only snag is that bank managers have six months in which to become fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese.

The other news is that the treasurer at HSBC said that the peso could fall to P56.45 on political concerns. The oil minister of Iran warned that oil prices might reach $70 a barrel and the INQUIRER reported that the BIR would miss its July tax target by 20 percent or P8 billion. The market continues to drift.

LATE NEWS: San Miguel wants to acquire 49 percent of Berri but Halle says she wants to continue making movies. While making "Die Another Day," she fell through a trapdoor on the set. It was just a stage she was going through.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

Gov't drafting policy . . .

From page B1

P50,000 to turn a regular taxi into an autogas-fed cab. Interested operators can avail themselves of financing from the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines.

Autogas cabs have started to become quite popular in Cebu City. During DOE consultations there, three taxi terminals were inspected, all of which had a total of 290 units of autogas-fed cabs.

Emerson Taxi had 47 autogas taxis in operation and a Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. dispensing station that had a 2,000 US gallons water capacity LPG tank. Jays Express Taxi had 43 autogas taxis and a Shell dispensing station of the same capacity. RP Corominas Taxi and Corominas Taxi had a combined 200 autogas cabs and Shell and Petron Corp. dispensing stations.

Shell requires a minimum of 40 taxis for the installation of a dispensing pump in the taxi terminal or garage.

According to the DOE's update Philippine Energy Plan, an autogas standard for road vehicles, cylinders and dispensing stations would be developed within the year, in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry.

Borra recommended that, in drafting the policy framework, the economic differences of taxi operations in various cities be considered, saying that boundary levels, fuel costs and operating hours differed from one city to another.

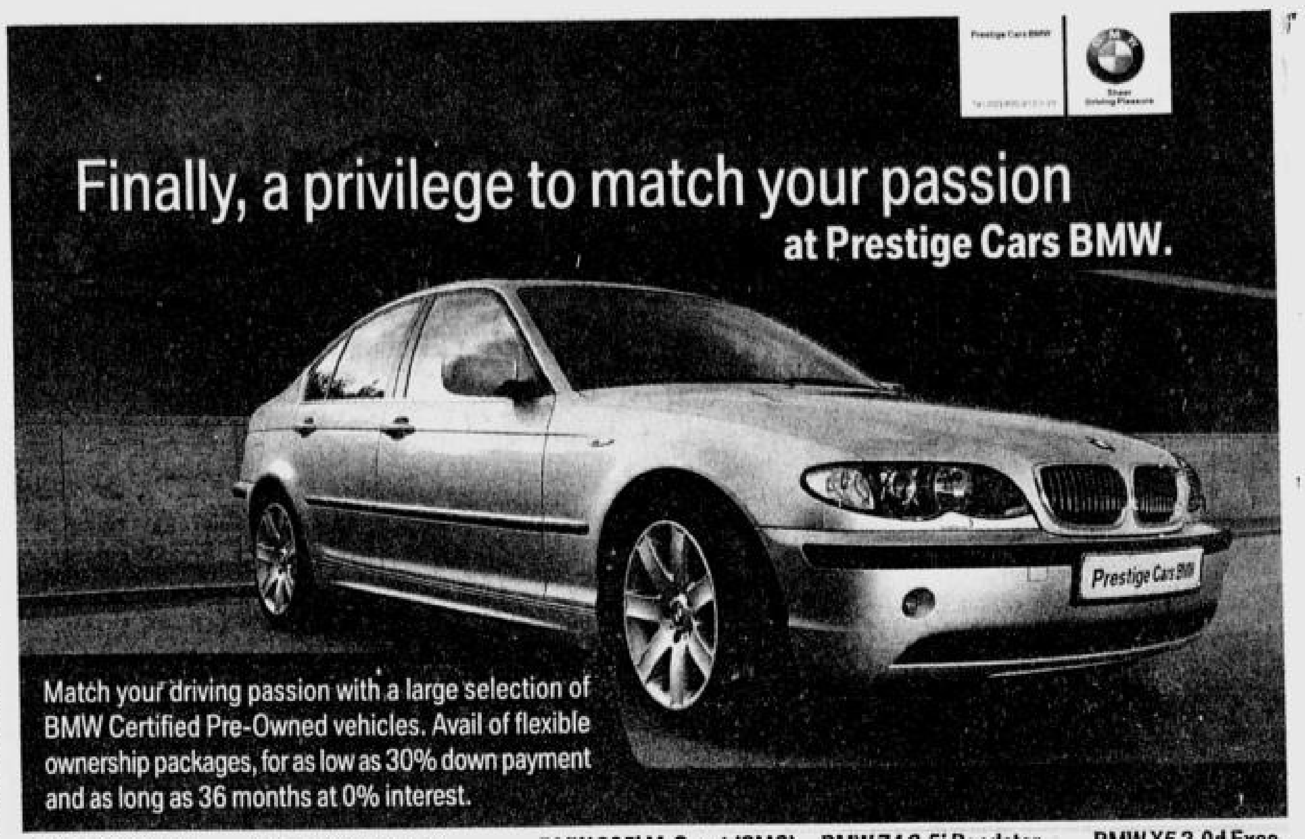
To be able to include these factors in the policy framework, the DOE will be going around the country to gather inputs from industry stakeholders, particularly in key cities nationwide.

After the Cebu consultation held last July 7, schedules have been set for similar consultations in Metro Manila, Baguio City, Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City and Iloilo City.

In Metro Manila, approximately 108 autogas taxis are now plying the streets, and two Petron dispensing pumps are available to provide them with fuel.

Shell is conducting a pilot project with a taxi operator in Cagayan de Oro City on autogas taxi operations.

Baguio City and Davao City have been identified as two of the pilot "Clean Cities" under the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Clean Cities Program, which promotes the use of alternative transport fuels. Iloilo City is a Clean Cities candidate.



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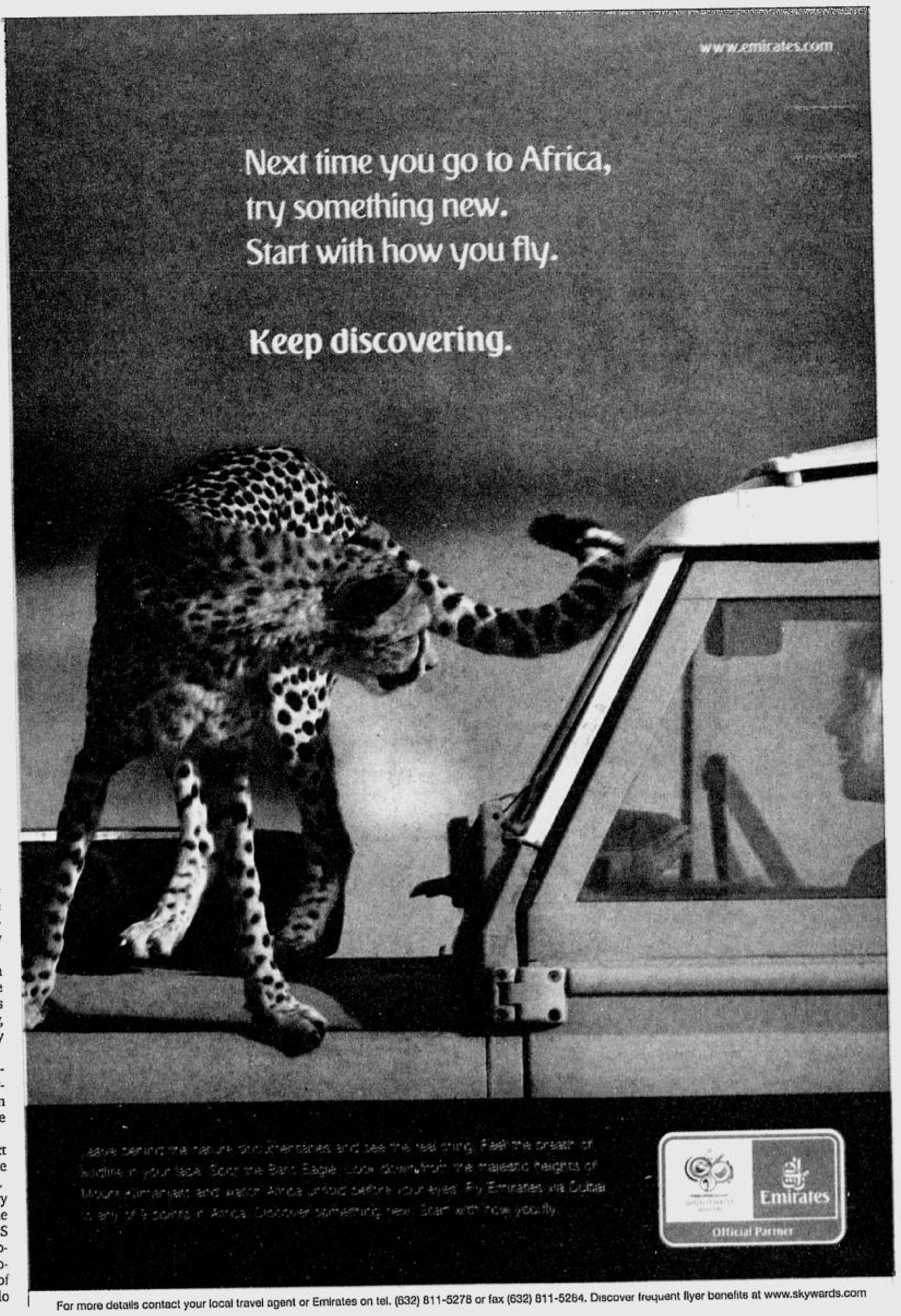

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INVITATION TO BID

LEASE AND DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMERCIAL LOT LOCATED WITHIN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CENTER (NGC) – EASTSIDE

1. The NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY shall accept lease proposals for the commercial use and development of Lot 1-A covered by TCT no. RT-34366 (28391) of the subdivision plan (LRC) Psd-11984 situated at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and the Interim Batasan Pambansa (IBP) Road, Diliman, Quezon City, which is registered under the Republic of the Philippines, having an area of three thousand six hundred sixty (3,660.0) square meters.
2. Property for lease shall have a maximum area of 3,160 square meters. It is within the fifty-(50) meter depth, measured right after the ninety five (95) meter road right-of-way which is designated as a commercial area along Commonwealth Avenue.
3. The proposed development of the lot by the lease proponent shall be in accordance with the Site Development Plan conceived for the National Government Center (NGC) – Eastside Development Project based on the provisions of Republic Act No. 9207, otherwise known as the NGC Housing and Land Utilization Act of 2003.
4. Minimum bid for the lease shall not be lower than PhP3,033,600.00 per annum. A minimum of 10% of the advanced annual lease payment in the form of Manager's check shall be tendered during the actual bidding.
5. Letters of Intent shall be submitted to the The Chairman, *Commercial/Industrial Bids & Awards Committee (COINBAC)* c/o the Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Main Office, National Housing Authority, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Bidding will be conducted by COINBAC through open competitive bidding procedures.
7. Bidding materials, inclusive of the *Terms of Reference (TOR)* can be secured from the Secretariat for a non-refundable fee of PhP1,000.00.
8. SCHEDULES

1. Submission of Letter of Intent	From August 11, to August 18, 2005, office hours	c/o CIED/Secretariat 2nd Floor, NHA Main Office
2. Submission of Pre-Qualification Requirements	August 18, 2005, office hours	-do-
3. Pre-Bid Conference	August 22, 2005, 10:00 a.m.	Operations Center, 3rd Floor, NHA Main Office
4. Submission of Bids	August 29, 2005, 9:00 a.m. to 12 n.n.	-do-
5. Opening of Bids	August 29, 2005, 2:00 p.m.	-do-

The NHA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to the contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Chairman, COINBAC

(PDI - Aug. 4 & 9, 2005)

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SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATE

I, **MANUEL C. SAN JOSE**, Corporate Secretary of the Manila International Airport Authority, do hereby certify that, at the 254th Regular Board Meeting dated 15 July 2005, the MIAA Board passed the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-033

"**RESOLVED, That**, the authority of Management to increase the Domestic Passenger Terminal Fee for all departing passengers as follows:

TERMINAL	FROM	TO
1. NAIA Terminal 2	Php 100.00	Php 200.00
2. Domestic Terminal	Php 100.00	Php 200.00

be approved, as it is hereby approved, subject to existing rules and regulations".

"**RESOLVED, FURTHER,** That, said increase shall be effective fifteen (15) days after its publication in newspaper of general circulation".

That, the foregoing Resolution is still in full force and effect, and has not been repealed, amended, or modified as of this date.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed and affixed the seal of the MIAA to this Secretary's Certificate this 27th day of July 2005 in Pasay, Metro Manila.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL C. SAN JOSE**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI--August 2 & 9, 2005

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Tariffs on wood pulp, aerosol can ends cut

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG has ordered the reduction of Most Favored Nation tariffs on wood pulp and aerosol can ends to help local industries that use these products become more competitive.

Executive Order No. 450 signed last July 22 reduced MFN tariffs on mechanical and chemical wood pulp used for making paper to 1 percent.

EO 450 listed nine tariff lines, including unbleached, semi-bleached and bleached pulp.

Chemical wood pulp is produced by cooking wood with chemicals, such as caustic soda and bi-sulphite of lime.

On the other hand, mechanical wood pulp is produced by physically grinding wood.

Paper made from chemical wood pulp lasts longer as this type of pulp has longer fibers with impurities removed.

EO 450 also set tariffs on aerosol can ends that are made of tinplates—both top and bottom-at 3 percent.

Similar products categorized as stoppers, caps and lids—like crown corks, screw caps and pouring stoppers—as well as seals and other packing accessories made of metal were slapped a lower duty of 10 percent.

According to Malacañang, the order was part of government policy "to promote the development of sustainable, prosperous and internationally competitive domestic industries.

EO 450 is part of a batch of orders that lowered tariffs on imports following the country's commitments to regional and global economic agreements.

Last week, trade officials said fellow members of the World Trade Organization have cited the country's policies that were "inconsistent" with WTO measures during a trade policy review held in Geneva in July.

Trans-Asia group bags service contract

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy awarded last Friday an oil and gas exploration contract to a consortium led by Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp.

The consortium that got the contract covering a 900,000-hectare area west of Palawan included Australia's Ottoman Energy Ltd. and Isle of Man's AustralAsian Energy Ltd.

Trans-Asia vice president for exploration Raymundo Reyes told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that the initial 18-month contract period would be spent doing a new 400-kilometer 2D seismic survey as well as processing and interpreting 200 km of vintage 2D seismic, gravity and magnetic data.

"The partners have successive options to drill up to four exploratory wells during the balance of the seven-year exploration period," he said.

Ottoman and AustralAsian each have a 42.5-percent stake in the contract. Trans-Asia holds the remaining 15 percent.

Security Bank nets ₱670M

SECURITY Bank Corp. posted a net income of P670 million for the first semester of 2005, 41 percent higher than the P476 million it recorded in the same period last year.

The increase was attributed to the growth in net interest income to P1.89 billion in the first semester from P1.61 billion registered in the same period last year.

The growth in earning assets compensated for the narrowing margins due to lower market yields.

Non-interest income likewise reflected a hefty 42 percent year-on-year improvement from P601 million last year to P854 million for the first semester of 2005.

This was driven by an increase in income derived from service charges, fees, and commissions as well as better securities and foreign exchange trading gains.

Costs, on the other hand, went up by only 6 percent to P1.31 billion for the first semester of 2005 versus the P1.24 billion for the first semester of 2004.

This enabled the bank's cost-to-income ratio to improve to 48 percent from 56 percent in the previous year.

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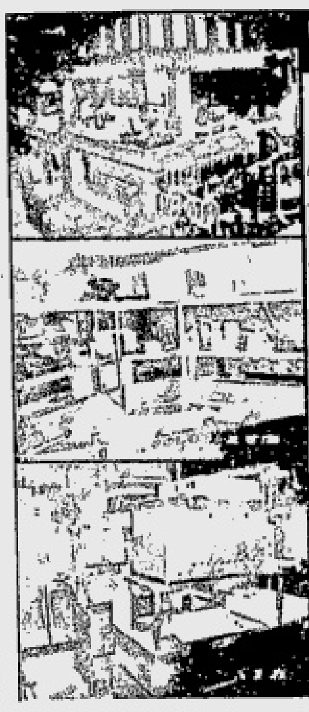

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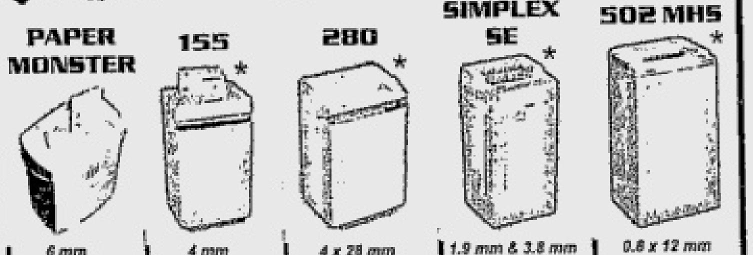

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October 3 - 6, 2005
PROGRAM OVERVIEW
The Enterpreneurial Leadership and Strategic Management (ELSM) course is part of the Entrepreneurial Management Series (EMS) of courses developed for entrepreneurs and key managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and enterprise development organizations.
The ELSM focuses on:
1. Strategizing and leadership approaches for enterprises
2. Essential tools for enterprise strategic planning
3. Strategies to improve enterprise positioning and performance
4. Leadership principles and applications
COURSE CONTENT
- Approaches to Strategy: Adaptive, Ideological, Creative, Rational
- The Strategic Planning Process
  - External Assessment: A Framework for Strategizing
    - Looking at the Big Picture
    - Market and Micro Market Analysis: The Small Picture
  - Internal Assessment: A Framework for Organizational Diagnosis
- Enterprise Visioning and Positioning
- Entrepreneurial Leadership
  - The Entrepreneurial Leader: A Self-Assessment
  - Leading the Enterprise
  - Leadership Challenge
- Applying the Learnings to your Enterprise
  - Strategic Plan for your Enterprise
  - Leadership Action Program
ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
For inquiries and reservation call:
Ms. Luvy Villanueva/ Ms. Liza Ayalde
Tel +632 892-4011 to 25
ext. 187, 252, 356, 332
Telefax +632 813-3302
Email ace@mail.aim.edu.ph
lvillanueva@mail.aim.edu.ph
lbalina@mail.aim.edu.ph
EQUIS ACCREDITED
Eugenio Lopez Foundation Bldg., Joseph R. McMicking Campus 123 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City 1260 Philippines
www.aim.edu.ph

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee – Head Office, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas invites BSPHO-EPS registered companies/contractors and other interested suppliers to a public bidding for the supply of services thru outsourcing of fourty (40) Plant Workers for deployment at the Mint and Refinery Operations Department, Security Plant Complex in Quezon City.

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) 2,001,504.00

Duration of Contract: Six (6) months reckoned from the date of assumption of duty

Bid documents are available from 01 August 2005 to 12 August 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,050.00 at the following:

BAC Secretariat
Rm. 2-2, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Building
cor. A. Mabini and P. Ocampo Sr. Sts., Malate, Manila
Tel. No(s) 523-1321

Pre-Bid Conference on 15 August 2005; 3:00 PM
Bidding Date and Time: 23 August 2005; 2:00 PM
Place: Rm. MR2A, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, Malate, Manila

Interested bidders shall submit not later than the bidding date and time the following documents in three (3) separate envelopes

Envelope No. 1:

1. Articles of Incorporation and Business Registration Papers
2. Y2004 Audited Financial Statements (Income Statement & Balance Sheet).
3. a. Y2004 Income Tax Return duly stamped/received by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) or its authorized agent bank.
   b. Tax Clearance Certificate
4. Valid and current Mayor's Permit/Municipal License
5. Prospective bidder's computation for its Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) which shall be at least equal to the ABC, duly signed by the authorized signing official and supported with pertinent documents, i.e., financial statements and copies of on-going project contracts, or a commitment from a licensed bank to extend to it a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid, or a certification from the bank stating that the bidder has a cash deposit with a holding period of at least one (1) month from date of bidding. The commitment or deposit certificate shall be in an amount not lower than 10% of the ABC. The NFCC shall be computed as follows: NFCC = [(Current assets – Current liabilities)(K)] minus value of all outstanding projects K = 10
6. Sworn statement that the prospective bidder is not blacklisted from bidding in any Government Office, Agency, Corporation
7. Letter authorizing the BAC or its duly authorized representative to verify any or all of the documents submitted for eligibility check.
8. Sworn certification by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative that each of the documents submitted is an original copy or a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original
9. Affidavit of the prospective bidder that he or she or any officer of their corporation is not related to the Head of the Procuring Entity by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree
10. Valid and current certification issued by the Social Security System (SSS) that the firm has no pending case of non-payment of SSS contributions
11. Sworn certification from the bidder of its compliance with existing labor laws and standards
12. List of clients with similar manpower services complete with the names of the contact person(s), addresses and telephone/fax numbers

Envelope No. 2:

1. Instructions to Bidders
2. Certification of Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the bidding
3. Original Bid Security

Envelope No. 3:

Price Proposal with attached cost breakdown

All envelopes shall be dropped in the bid box located at Room MR2A, 5-Storey Building, BSP Main Complex. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

The BSP assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA
Chairman

(PDI – August 9, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF ONE-YEAR GENERATION OF BUNKER-C WASTE OIL

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING . August 30, 2005 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Bldg.-1, Grd. Floor, NPC-HO, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the one-year generation of waste Bunker C for the following NPC power barges.

Power Barge and Location	Minimum Bid Price
1. PB-101, Osmeña Wharf, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu	P 11.00/liter
2. PB-102, Brgy. Obrero, Iloilo City, Panay Island	P 11.00/liter
3. PB-103, Brgy. Botongan, Estancia Iloilo Province, Panay Island	P 11.00/liter
4. PB-104, Brgy. Calumpang, General Santos City, Mindanao	P 10.65/liter

Participating bidders must be accredited waste oil treater or processor by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Environment Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) and ready to present their valid Permit to Operate and Environment Compliance Certificate.

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S / CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE OFFER.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2004 ORIGINAL OR XEROX COPY)
3. TAX CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE (VALID UP TO DATE OF BIDDING)

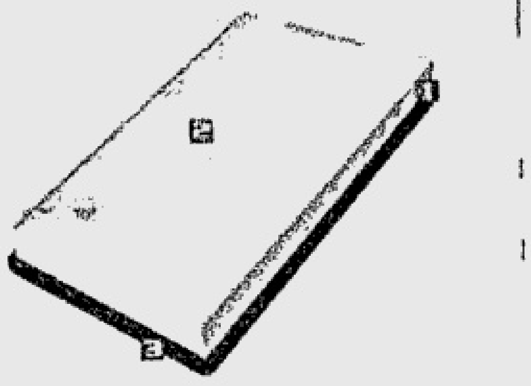
PARTIES WHO WISH TO SECURE BID FORMS MUST PRESENT VALID IDENTIFICATION CARD LIKE DRIVER'S LICENSE, GSIS ID, SSS ID, POSTAL ID, PASSPORT, PRC ID AND COMPANY ID.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. Alfonso D. Alday, Manager, Warehousing, Inventory, Traffic and Asset Disposal Division (WITADD) at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C. or call telephone no. 922-8431. **Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 PM, August 29, 2005.**

For the Materials and Management Department

(Sgd.) FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI–Aug. 8, 9 & 10, 2005)



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Ecop ok's wage hike for househelpers

THE EMPLOYERS Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) is amenable to adjusting the minimum wage rate of househelpers in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized areas from P800 to P1,500 a month.

This was the position taken by Ecop President Rene Y. Soriano in contrast to the proposal to peg to P3,000 a month the minimum wage rate of househelpers in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized areas under House Bill No. 3118 authored by Rep. Carmen Cari.

Ecop, however, agrees with the proposed increase of minimum wage rates of househelpers from P650 to P1,000 a month for those in other chartered cities and first class municipalities; and from P550 to P800 a month for those in other municipalities under the same bill.

Soriano noted that Ecop also supports House Bill No. 3119, also authored by Rep. Cari, which envisions to extend mandatory coverage of the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) to all househelpers regardless of the wages they receive from their employers and all househelpers currently eligible for benefits under the NHIP. This bill, in effect, mandates employers of househelpers to pay the monthly contribution as provided by law but not to exceed 3% of the househelpers' monthly salary.

On the proposed "Magna Carta for Household Helpers" or "Batas Kasambahay" as embodied in House Bill No. 1606, the ECOP leadership said while such proposed legislation is undoubtedly laudable in intent, "it provides for new terms and conditions of employment for household helpers that are still quite advanced for a developing economy like the Philippines, taking into account its high incidence of poverty, chronically high unemployment and underemployment, excessive population growth and limited resources for governance."

Soriano enumerated some of the "unrealistic standards and requirements" sought by HB 1606, such as: written employment contract duly signed and notarized between the employer and household helper which provides for certain minimum terms; medical certificate from a licensed physician as pre-requisite for employment the cost of which shall be for the account of the employer; entitlement to 13th month pay equivalent to one month basic salary; and, vacation leave of 14 days with pay exclusive of the one day rest day per week.

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS

In Compliance with RA 7041

1. GRAFT INVESTIGATION OFFICER I
   A. RESEARCH AND SPECIAL STUDIES STUDIES BUREAU - Item No. OMBA-GIO1-31-1998; OMBA-GIO1-76-1998; (2 Positions); SG 26

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: 3 years of experience in the practice of law, counselling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related work; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

OR

Education: Master's degree relevant to the job; Experience: 5 years of experience in conducting community work, systems studies/analysis, counselling, investigation or other related work; Training: 32 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility

2. GRAFT INVESTIGATION OFFICER II
   B. RESEARCH AND SPECIAL STUDIES BUREAU - Item Nos. OMBA-GIO2-43-1998; OMBA-GIO2-46-1998; (2 Positions); SG 27

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: 4 years of experience in the practice of law, counselling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related work; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

OR

Education: Master's degree relevant to the job; Experience: 5 years of experience in conducting community work, systems studies/analysis, counselling, investigation or other related work; Training: 32 hours relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility

3. ASSOCIATE GRAFT INVESTIGATION OFFICER I
   A. GENERAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU A - Item No. OMBA-AGIO1-100-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-101-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-103-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-104-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-105-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-106-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-107-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO9-109-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-110-2005; OMBA-GIO1-111-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-116-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-117-2005; (12 Positions); SG 15
   B. GENERAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU B - Item No. OMBA-AGIO1-70-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-71-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-72-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-73-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-74-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-75-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-102-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-108-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-112-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-113-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-114-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-115-2005; (12 Positions); SG 15
   C. GENERAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU C - Item No. OMBA-AGIO1-76-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-77-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-78-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-79-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-80-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-81-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-82-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-83-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-84-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-85-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-86-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-87-2005; (12 Positions); SG 15
   D. ASSETS INVESTIGATION BUREAU - Item No. OMBA-AGIO1-88-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-89-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-90-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-91-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-92-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-93-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-94-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-95-2005 OMBA-AGIO1-96-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-97-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-98-2005; OMBA-AGI01-99-2005; (12 Positions); SG 15
   E. INTELLIGENCE BUREAU - Item No. OMBA-AGIO1-118-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-119-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-120-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-121-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-122-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-123-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-124-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-125-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-126-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-127-2005;
   OMBA-AGIO1-128-2005; OMBA-AGIO1-129-2005; (12 Positions); SG 15

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

OR

Education: Bachelor's degree relevant to the job; Experience: 6 months of experience in conducting community work, systems studies/analyses, counselling, investigation or other related work; Training: None required; Eligibility: Career Service Professional/ Second Level Eligibility

Applicants should submit within ten (10) working days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

1) A letter stating the position applied for;
2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
3) 1" x 1" picture (colored)
4) *Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5) *Transcript of Records;
6) *Certificate of Seminars/Training attended;
7) *Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable)
8) *Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

*Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

Awardwinning children's stories on DZAS-AM

THE CULTURAL Center of the Philippines (CCP), Alitaptap Storytellers Philippines Inc. (ASPI), Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) and DZAS present "Wan Dey, Isang Araw", a 30 minute weekly radio storytelling show for children, every Saturday beginning August 6, at 9 AM on DZAS 702 on the AM band. "Wan Dey, Isang Araw" will showcase prizewinning children's stories by Filipino authors. The radio program will also feature interviews with the authors. It will be hosted by Luis Gatmaitan, a medical doctor, former PBBY president and awardwinning author. "Wan Dey, Isang Araw will feature the following stories and storytellers: August 6-"Uuwi na ang Nanay kong si Darna" by Edgar Samar to be read by Charlyn Chua. This story is dedicated to children of OFWs. It tells the story of young Popoy, who is beside himself with excitement as the arrival of his OFW mother nears. To add to his anticipation, Popoy's father tells him that his mother is none other the super heroine Darna! August 13-"Sandosenang Kuya" by Russel Molina to be read by Ethel Escasinas. This story opens the eyes of young children to the world of orphan children and lead them an appreciation for their own families.

August 20-"Mayroon akong Alagang Puno" by Carla Pacis to be read by Jeralyn Develos. All about how stretching one's imagination can bring a child to places in the past and the future, in and outside of himself.

August 27-"Ang Magic ni Apo Mayor" by Grace Chiong to be read by Mario Noval. Apo Mayor is a terrifying figure, a man of mystery, in the eyes of the children of the town of Umingan. One child named Teo isn't afraid of him and musters the courage to find out what lies behind the fearsome exterior of Apo Mayor.

September 3-"Sandosenang Sapatos" by Dr. Luis Gatmaitan to be read by Charlyn Chua. Karina and Susie are daughters of a shoemaker. But it is only Susie who can wear the shoes he makes. This story illustrates the love of a father for a daughter with a physical disability.

September 10-"Ang Batang Ayaw Maligo" by Pen Alba to be read by Melanie Abad. Popong is left with his grandmother Erlinda when his parents go away for three days. Popong hates baths and, of course, takes the opportunity not to take a bath. What happens when a child doesn't take a bath for three days?

For more information, please call CCP Media Arts at 832-1125 local 1704-1705 or visit the CCP website at www.culturalcenter.gov.ph or email broadcast@ culturalcenter.gov.ph

NFA IFAD and FAI programs, designed to help farmers

THE RICE being distributed by farmers' organizations (FOs) under the National Food Authority's Farmers' as Institutionalized Distributors Program (IFAD) is no longer within the control of the food agency. According to NFA Administrator Gregorio Y. Tan Jr. contrary to a news report, the FOs have the sole responsibility in the distribution of their rice allocation under the FAD program. The NFA's IFAD and FAI programs were conceptualized to help farmers become entrepreneurs by participating the distribution and importation of rice. However, only accredited FOs shall take part in this distribution program. Allocation of stocks is equally divided among them based on their procurement records. Tan said the NFA only provides the necessary technical requirements to FOs to help them succeed in the implementation of the said programs. Tan encouraged the public to report any irregularities by reporting them directly to authorized NFA personnel manning the agency's Customer Assistance Units (CAUs) stationed in all NFA offices nationwide or through the Text NFA through mobile number 0917-6210927. For information on programs of the Department of Agriculture, please visit the DA's official website at www.da.gov.ph.

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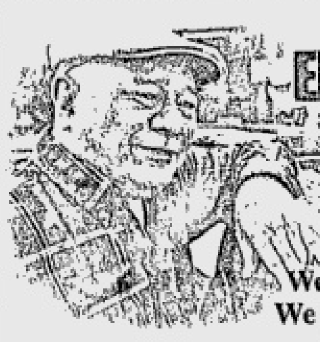

EDUARDO "EDDIE" C. CRISOLOGO

(October 14, 1940 – August 7, 2005)

We celebrate his life
We mourn his passing

But we rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus Christ is the Giver of Eternal Life.

Eddie is survived by his wife **Susan Erfe-Mejia**; daughters and sons-in-law **Kamela & Tony Seen, Ivi & Arnel Dimasuay, Suzette & Perle Siapno**; his sons and daughters-in-law, **Tim & Joy, Edward & Jai**; grandchildren, **Paolo, Kreme, Don, Luis, Arvin, Albert, Ava, Gabby, Gia, Isabelle & Jasmine**; mother **Cristina Castro Vda de Crisologo**; brothers **Jing, Sammy & Bok** and sisters **Norma, Tessie & Bing**.

His body lies in state at the Eternal Gardens Dagupan Chapel. Requiem mass will be held on Thursday, 10 a.m. August 11, 2005 and cremation will follow at 12 noon at the Eternal Crematory, A.B. Fernandez Ave., West, Dagupan City.

DOMINADOR SAN DIEGO MANAHAN SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator
on August 7, 2005 at the age of 81.

His loving children **Hermie & Altesa, Dory & Danny, Belen & Danny, Mert & Jojo, Dominador Jr. (†), and Millet & Perry**; grandchildren **Priscilla, Irene, Jonathan, Patricia, Christianne, John Christian & Christian**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at the family residence
at 175 8th Avenue West, Grace Park,
Caloocan City.

Interment will be announced later.

Flordeliz Diosomito Papa

of **Naic, Cavite** and **U.P. Village, Quezon City**
wife of **Commo. Dioscoro E. Papa** (†)

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on August 5, 2005 at the age of 81.

Her beloved children **Beth & Jurgen Rohwedder, Carol & Jing Valenzuela, Bong & Rara Papa**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Estelita & Santiago Mesina** (†), **Elvira** (†) & **Rudolfo Nazareno** (†), **Emelita & Reynaldo Paderna**; grandchildren **Trina, Pucci, Karlo, Rio, Arno, Paolo, Kevin** and **Pamela**; great grandchild **Kayin**; nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her home 33 Maginhawa St., U.P. Village, Quezon City.

Interment will be on August 10, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, U.P. Village.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate

❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Our Dearly Beloved Angie

ANGELIE de BORJA CANLAS

August 2, 1964 – August 3, 2005

has peacefully joined our Lord

She will be missed deeply by her loving husband ***Michael*** *and son* ***Mikko****; parents* ***Angel*** *and* ***Nellie de Borja****; parents-in-law* ***Toting*** *and* ***Ping Canlas****;* ***Lola Coring*** *and* ***Lola Vacion****; brothers, sisters and in-laws* ***Ferdie*** *(†) and* ***Anna de Borja****,* ***Pam*** *and* ***Aaron Gonzales****,* ***Jenny*** *and* ***Abet San Juan****,* ***Tina*** *and* ***Edwin Rodelas****,* ***Dennis*** *and* ***Lala de Borja****,* ***Junjun*** *and* ***Mel Oracion****,* ***Kenneth*** *and* ***Coco Critelli****,* ***Pipay Canlas****,* ***Tong Canlas****,* ***Michelle Canlas*** *and nephews, nieces and friends.*

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Pasig City.

Interment will be at the Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio after the 8:30 a.m. Mass on Wednesday, August 10, 2005

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." — John 3:16

Our Beloved

CESAR LIMJAP PIO RODA

(PMA Class '56)

Peacefully joined our Lord
on August 8, 2005 at the age of 73..

His loving wife **Lily**, children **Beth & Danny Chiong, Jojo & Ria, Mary Anne & Tom Cadiz, John & Anna**, and **Michelle**; grandchildren **Denise, Marie, Bernadette, Carlos, Julia, Tommy, Inna, Gabriel, Katrina & Kyle**; sister **Concepcion Teodoro**; brothers **Rading & Dr. Claro Pio Roda**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Jerome Emilliani Church, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

On August 13, 2005, his remains will be laid to rest in his crypt after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the St. James Church, Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
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MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St. Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City; Tel. 890-63-18
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City. Tel Nos. 843-8838/30, Fax No. 843-9223
ST ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City. Tels. 852-6238, 852-7284

• MALABON
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219 Gen. Luna St. Concepcion Malabon, Metro Manila;
Tels. 2812003, 2813034, 2810522

• MANDALUYONG
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044

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BUSINESS

BSP payout to gov't short by P2B, says COA

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COMMISSION on Audit said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas might have understated by P2.32 billion its cash dividend remittance to the government based on 2003 net earnings.

In a recent report, COA said that for 2003, the BSP's net income stood at P6.6 billion compared to P3.6 billion in 2002 and P4 billion in 2001.

However, the BSP that same year had remitted only P2.62 billion in cash dividends, as it reduced the net income for distribution by the reserves expenses for property insurance (P800 million) and for security plant complex (P2.3 billion).

"Dividends paid to national government was understated by P2.32 billion since 75 percent of the P6,596.625 million (P6.6 billion) net income is P4,947,469 million (P4.95 billion)," the COA report said.

The audit commission said the amount of P3.1 billion deducted as reserves for property insurance and security plant complex rehabilitation was in violation of Section 43 of the BSP charter and Republic Act No. 7656.

According to the section that deals with computation of profits and losses: "In the calculation of net profits, the Bangko Sentral shall make adequate allowance or establish adequate reserves for bad and doubtful accounts."

Under a transitory provision in the regulator's charter, "the BSP is required to remit 75 percent of its net profit to a special deposit account ... or to the national government."

"We recommend that the (BSP's) comptrollership department coordinate with the [national government] regarding the computation of net earnings as the basis for the 75-percent dividend and remit the additional dividend, if warranted," the report said.

COA acknowledged that the BSP's general counsel had argued that the institution was not covered by the provisions of RA 7656, as it had its own charter under RA 7653.

RA 7656 requires government owned and controlled corporations to declare dividends under certain conditions. Section 2d of the law stated that: "Net earnings shall mean income derived from whatever source, whether exempt or subject of tax ... but in no case shall any reserve for whatever purpose be allowed as a deduction from net earnings."

COA, for its part said it was a basic rule in statutory construction that when words and phrases of the statute were clear and unequivocal, their meaning must be determined from the language employed and the statute must be taken to mean exactly what it said.

The COA added that the law must be given its literal meaning and applied without attempted interpretation.

"The charging of reserves for the self-insurance and security plant complex against the net income contravenes clearly the provision of Section 43 of RA 7653 since they were not reserves for bad and doubtful accounts," the COA said.

UKAY-UKAY CASUALTY

The spread of ukay-ukay stores—retail outlets that sell used, mostly imported, clothes—across the country is killing off small clothing businesses like this tailoring shop under the Doroteo Jose LRT station in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Customers used to walk in and instruct the seamstress to alter or cut their apparel to the desired sized. But not anymore, according to shop owner Crisanta Vinoya (not in photo), blaming the ukay-ukay shops and their dirt-cheap wares for the drop in sales. LYN RILLON

SM heiress to take a seat on EPCIB board

SY-COSON

TERESITA Sy-Coson of the SM group has quit as chair of the conglomerate's banking arm, Banco de Oro Universal Bank, in preparation for her joining the 15-member board of the bigger Equitable PCIBank.

BDO disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that Sy-Coson had tendered her resignation as chair and director of the bank effective last Friday.

The BDO board has deferred the appointment of a new director and the election of a new chair to its next regular meeting in August, the bank said.

But Coson said in an interview yesterday that the deal to purchase the 24.76-percent stake held by the Go family in EPCIBank would have to be consummated first.

"It will still have to be approved by the regulators," Coson said, referring to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Once the deal is closed, the SM group will take over the four seats allotted to the Gos in the EPCIBank board.

Sy said the SM group had yet to decide on who else to nominate as representatives to the EPCIBank board.

The SM group is entitled to four seats following the purchase of 180 million shares of EPCIBank for P56.50 a share or a total of P10.2 billion.

The group also agreed to purchase 1.98 million or 10 percent of Equitable Card Network Inc. for P303.80 a share or about P600 million.

Prior to the buyout of the Gos, the SM group already had a 2.5-percent stake in EPCIBank. The transaction thus hiked its interest to 27.26 percent.

The sellout by the Go family ended the shareholder squabble that pitted the family that founded Equitable Bank 55 years ago against a bigger voting bloc comprised of the SSS, Government Service Insurance System and the Romualdez family.

As of the first semester, BDO has total assets of P195 billion while EPCIBank has P334 billion.

China Banking Corp., where the SM group also holds a controlling stake, has total assets of P127.86 billion.

Doris C. Dumlao

Gov't seen to be on right fiscal track

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said the national government remains well on track to meet its fiscal target this year, as various administrative measures are seen to offset whatever shortfall is posted by the main revenue collecting agencies.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing that other revenues remitted to the Bureau of Treasury, aside from collections by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, are already enough to keep the government stay on track of its target.

He was referring to revenues generated from the privatization of government assets and the increase in fees and charges by other government agencies.

Earlier, the DOF directed government agencies to increase their contributions to the national coffers by raising their fees and charges.

The government set a target of reducing its budget deficit this year to P180 billion from P187 billion in 2004.

Two months ago, the DOF announced that it was projecting a much better budget-deficit figure of only P160 billion this year because of the encouraging fiscal performance in the first half.

In the first six months of the year, the deficit stood at only P67.5 billion, or P31 billion lower than the P98.5-billion target for the period.

But the interagency Development Budget Coordination Committee has revised the projection to match the original target of P180 billion, following the suspension of the expanded value-added tax (VAT) law and preliminary reports that the Bureau of Internal Revenue missed it collection target for July by 20 percent.

The DOF stressed that the P180-billion target remains achievable, and that setbacks like the possible shortfall in revenue collection by the BIR and the BOC, would only affect the better-than-target projections and not the target itself.

Private ports urge PPA to extend their contracts

By Clarissa S. Batino

PRIVATE port operators Asian Terminals Inc. and International Container Terminal Services Inc. have asked the Philippine Ports Authority to extend their respective contracts to operate the Port of Manila by another 25 years.

"This early, [the private ports] have already asked for another 25-year extension," said Oscar Sevill, a PPA general manager.

Sevilla said that the contracts of ATI and ICTSI will expire on 2013.

The petition, he added, had not been submitted to the PPA board for approval.

"I think the requests are justifiable," said the PPA chief. "They need a long-term contract so they will continue to invest."

ATI has a pending $300-million investment program for the South Harbor.

ATI and ICTSI are engaged in handling of container and bulk cargoes. They operate in the Port of Manila, the country's biggest port where most foreign ships—carrying goods that are imported and those to be exported—dock.

ATI also operates the phase one of the Batangas port and will soon run the second phase until the PPA conducts a bidding.

Raul Santos, assistant general manager of the PPA, said that ATI would have to operate the second phase of the Batangas port for the meantime because it already has the equipment and the expertise.

The PPA originally planned to operate the phase two of the Batangas port while the terms of reference for the bidding was being prepared. A bidding, said Sevilla, will be conducted in early 2006.

Sevilla said the operations of the new port would likely be a toss-up again between ATI and ICTSI.

The government spent about P5.5 billion to develop the 128-hectare phase two of the Batangas port. The funds were borrowed from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The second phase is six times larger compared to the first phase of 20 hectares being operated by ATI.

Unlike the first phase that caters to purely container cargo aside from passengers, the second phase will be a mix operation of bulk, break bulk and containerized cargo but it will not have a passenger terminal, said the PPA chief.

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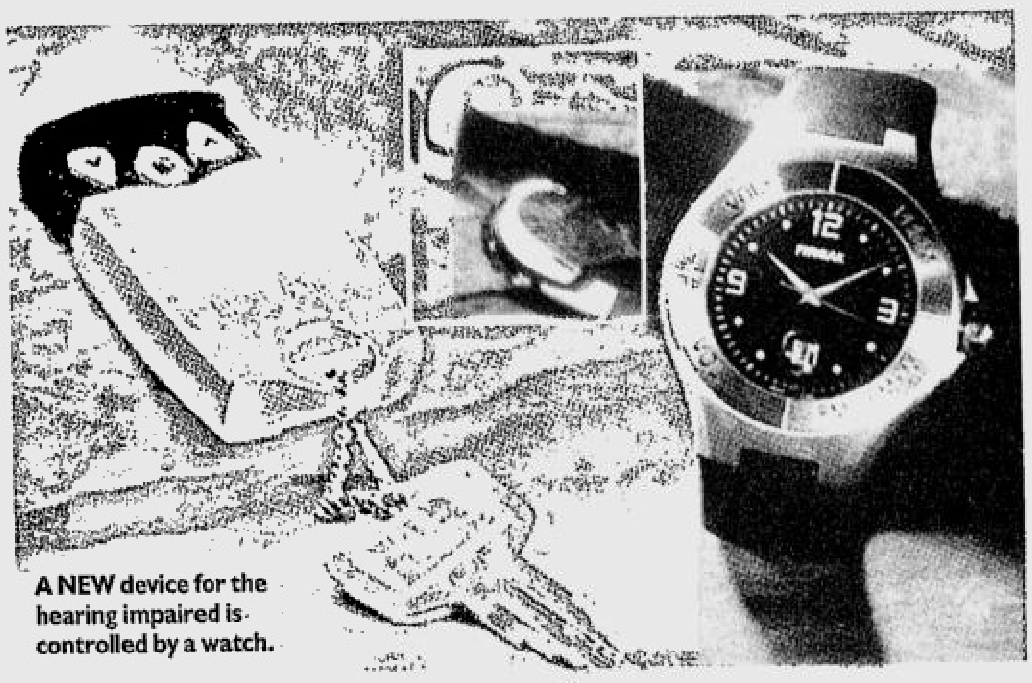

A NEW device for the hearing impaired is controlled by a watch.

Hearing is all in the wrist

By Belle V. Bondoc

A NEW state-of-the-art hearing aid, the Savia, was introduced in Manila recently by Phonak, a leading Swiss manufacturer of hearing systems.

The fully digital hearing aid has 20 frequency channels and digital surround-zoom that can manage multiple noise sources. A Savia set includes a wristwatch that works as a discreet remote control device.

Rene Burgin, the company's chief audiologist who was in Manila for the launch, stressed the importance of a good hearing aid, saying it was an instrument to provide hearing-impaired people constant care.

Burgin, who is responsible for product education, development and design of Phonak hearing systems, said, "(Savia was) actually the world's most sophisticated hearing aid today." He said the device worked like a "bionic" ear allowing users to search out background noise and eliminate unnecessary sounds.

Savia relies on the world's smallest and best performing microchip with unique processing capabilities.

It incorporates intelligent automation with an AutoPilot feature. This allows automatic adjustments of sound through four programs: quiet, noisy, speech and noise, and music.

"It can adjust to different environments," said Burgin. "All changes are automatic, smooth and gradual, you will hardly notice them."

The device enables wearers to understand and identify speech even in an echo-filled environment. "It accurately identifies the scene and automatically switches the program to a more appropriate setting," Burgin explained.

The device

Savia has a sensitive microphone setting that can change from the loudest noise source to music.

It can react as naturally as possible to the environment and cancel out noise.

Excellent sound quality and ultimate listening pleasure are ensured through Sound Cleaning elements that identify and remove disturbing components such as echo.

The AutoFocus feature uses breakthrough digital technology called Real Ear Sound to restore natural orientation abilities.

Another important feature is the DataLogging that records and restores the wearer's personal uses and listening preferences. The information can be downloaded to a computer to help hearing care professionals address individual needs.

HEARING/ C3

Life is how you make it

If only one major health risk is removed, women can live to a hundred

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

"LIFE is only as great as your ap petite for it."

Imagine what it would be like if you live to be 100. You might think it madness t even entertain the thought. It's almost lik asking a three-year-old to think about bein middle-aged.

But Deepa Chopra, MD, cha lenges us all to be lieve this: "The da you turn fifty is goin to be your secon birth." He suppose and proposes tha one can look at th prospect of living an other 40 or 50 year more.

Second birth

A Californi Health Department study revealed that, only one major health risk was re moved—arteriosclerosis, a disorder of th arteries—women's average life expectanc would reach 100. This alone is enough t make you ponder the realities of longevity.

Yet, we are unprepared for this. The ol concept says 50 is the time when we slo down, with the children almost done wit college or married. Your mid-life crisis over and you are aware if your presence i the world is either a success or failure, dra matic or undramatic, and your state of be ing is fulfilled or unfulfilled.

Your first birth happened without you understanding. Your second birth is diffe ent. If you were unprepared and ignorant c life before, now you are not. And you don have an excuse not to be prepared.

The pluses and minuses are clear. The on ly difference is that you have the same bod but one that can delay old age b choice—through a healthy lifestyle.

Thus, with this mindset, 50 is no longe the doorway to "old age" because you ar just beginning your "new age."

Plan your new life

Possibilities are limitless in this, your ne

LIFE/ C

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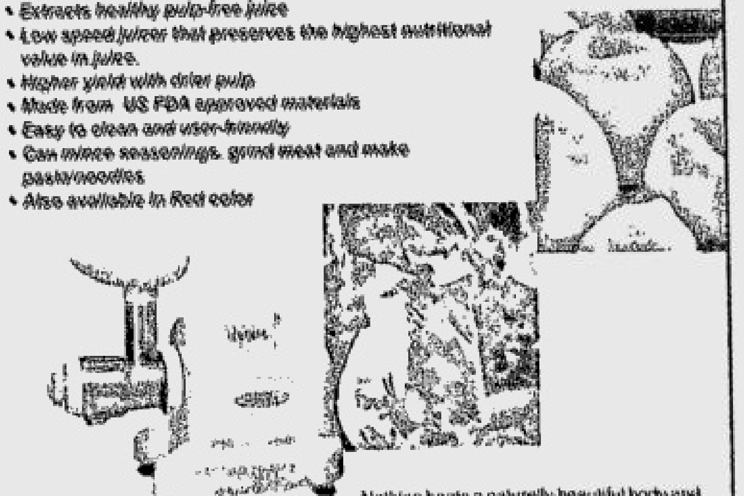

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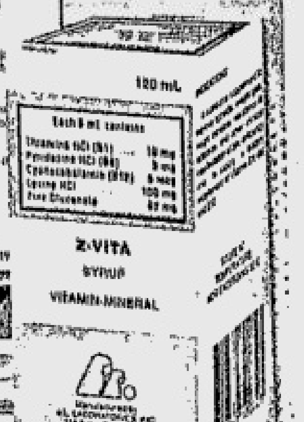

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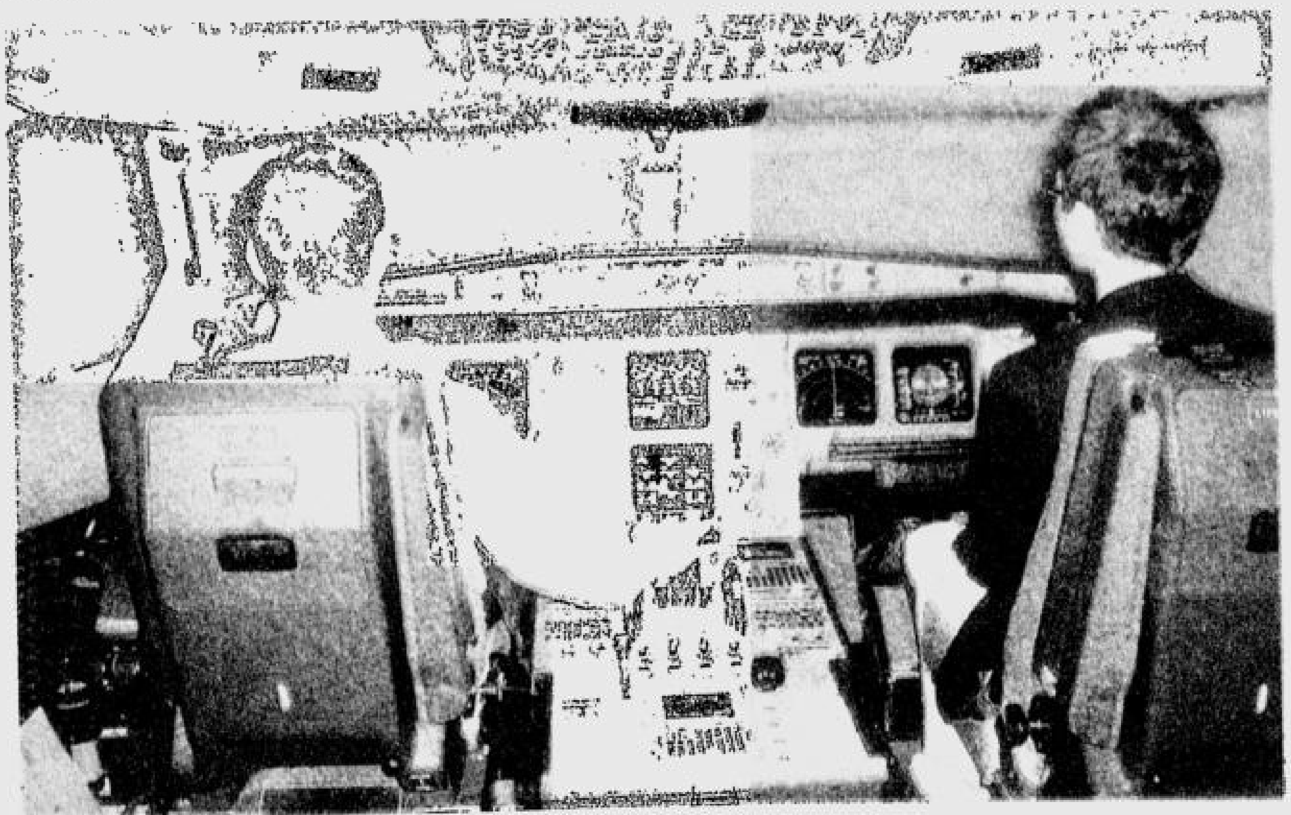
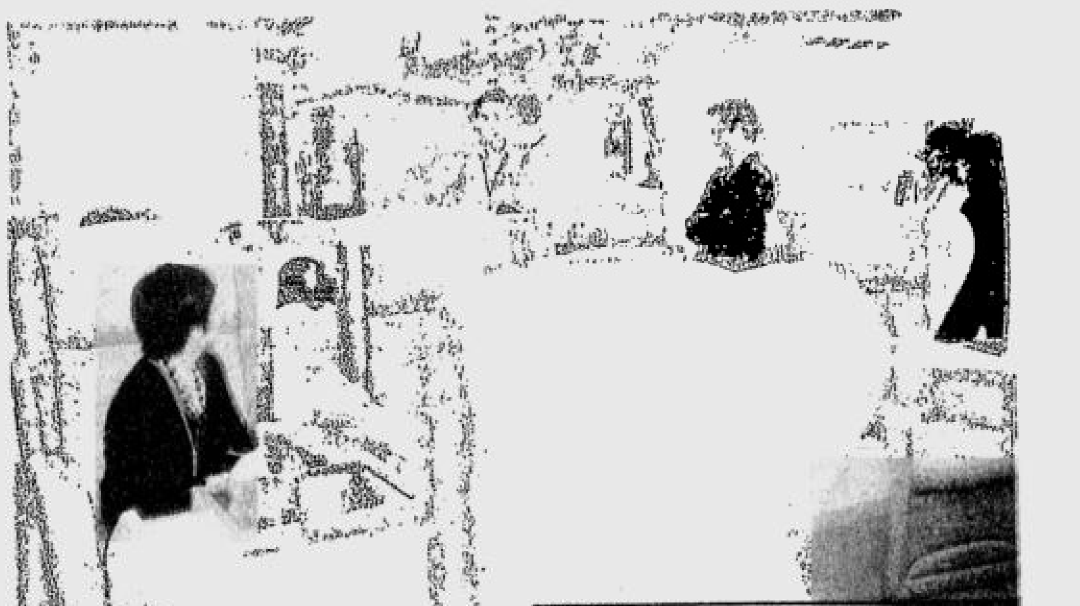


A PILOT demonstrates actual take-off and landing inside the A310-324 jet simulator.



RECRUITS train in the first class section of the new A380 jet.

TRAINING "plane" for new cabin crew recruits

Two-city gastronomic journey

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Moi using **Kodak** EasyShare system

INVITED by Singapore Airlines' secret weapon, **Rita Dy**, to be one of 40 other lifestyle columnists and editors, and food magazine editors from Asia, Europe and America, for a three-day program that would take us to two fantastic cities, Singapore and Shanghai, I said, "Yes, yes, I'll go!"

After all, *palanggas*, Sing and Shang are renowned for their culinary diversity. And, with one of the world's favorite airlines opening a route to the tables of some of the world's most awarded chefs that will soon delight Singapore Airlines' pampered passengers, how could I say "Non, merci!"

The day after I arrived in Singapore, we all met at the lobby of Changi Village Hotel for our visit to the Singapore Airlines Training and Catering facilities.

The S$80 million SIA training center sits on a 50,800-sq.m. lot that holds five other training centers, two of which we visited—the cabin crew and commercial training centers.

As we went on our tour, we stopped to watch new recruits being briefed on what to expect during the first four months of basic training. If they pass, they go through four more days of rigorous training before flying on short hops for 10 months.

Wine test

Then they finish a two-day mandatory wine program to learn all there is to know about wine, would you believe? Once they pass, the stewardesses are then allowed to serve and attend to the first and business class sections.

The crew must also learn to speak (not necessarily fluently) one language taught in the Languages Room—German, French or Spanish. Mandarin was added this year. We learned that crew members came from all over the world, particularly Asia.

We watched the crew do survival exercises in case of emergency. It's amazing how they were all completely capable of helping passengers in a crash landing on the ground and in the sea. We were amazed at how the girls and boys were trained to perfection the SIA way, *natch*.

We then looked at the simulators. At present, SIA has seven, including one B743, two B744 and three A340-200. A pilot gave us a tour then, in groups of six, we were brought to the cockpit for a demonstration of an actual takeoff, on flight and landing in a A310-324 jet. Wow, that was absolutely awesome, dahlings.

Hard to beat

Next stop was the hard-to-beat SATS Inflight Catering Center. To enter, you have to leave your passport at the security office in exchange for an ID that you have to wear all the time. In the center, we had to wear a robe, a shower cap and a breathing mask during the hour-and-a-half tour.

We first went to a huge warehouse where fruits were being delivered from all over the world. Our tour leader said all the insecticides were washed off before they were put on the meal trays of passengers.

The food, prepared in a humongous section of the center, goes to a spiral block chiller after cooking. This procedure, we were told, helped keep food fresh and bacteria-free. Later, the food is arranged on individual trays and, within 24 hours, loaded on SIA flights. We saw the kitchens that prepared different meals for SIA flights.

It's no wonder this airline has won tons of awards for its in-flight meals, *palanggas*.

Our last stop was the "world's first" Simulated Aircraft Cabin to test in-flight meal quality. Costing S$1.7 million, the simulator allows catering staff to test the taste at 30,000 ft or more.

Taste test

At that height, changes in cabin pressure, humidity and temperature affect the look and, most importantly, taste of food. The tasting is meant to ensure that meals prepared on the ground will taste and feel the same way up there.

Then, SIA's vice president for public affairs, **Stephen Forshaw**, and SATS vice president, **George Lee**, hosted an excellent lunch for us prepared by SIA's top chefs from the Catering Center. After the tour, we all agreed SIA had one of Asia's largest and most modern inflight catering kitchens. It had the perfect environment for chefs to create excellent inflight meals.

After a quick dash to the hotel for our luggage, we were off to Shanghai, the grand climax of this gastronomic trip, dahlings.

After a 4 ½-hour flight, we arrived in Shanghai before midnight and whisked off to the eye-catching colossal Ritz Carlton Hotel. Next morning, the 40 foreign writers and 60 writers from Shanghai, Beijing and other parts of China had a magnificent lunch at the hotel's Tea Garden with its several buffet tables.

At 1 p.m. sharp, we, the foreign journalists, met nine of the world's top chefs, who were also restaurant owners; and three of the world's most educated palates involved with SIA's renowned wine cellars.

Culinary panel

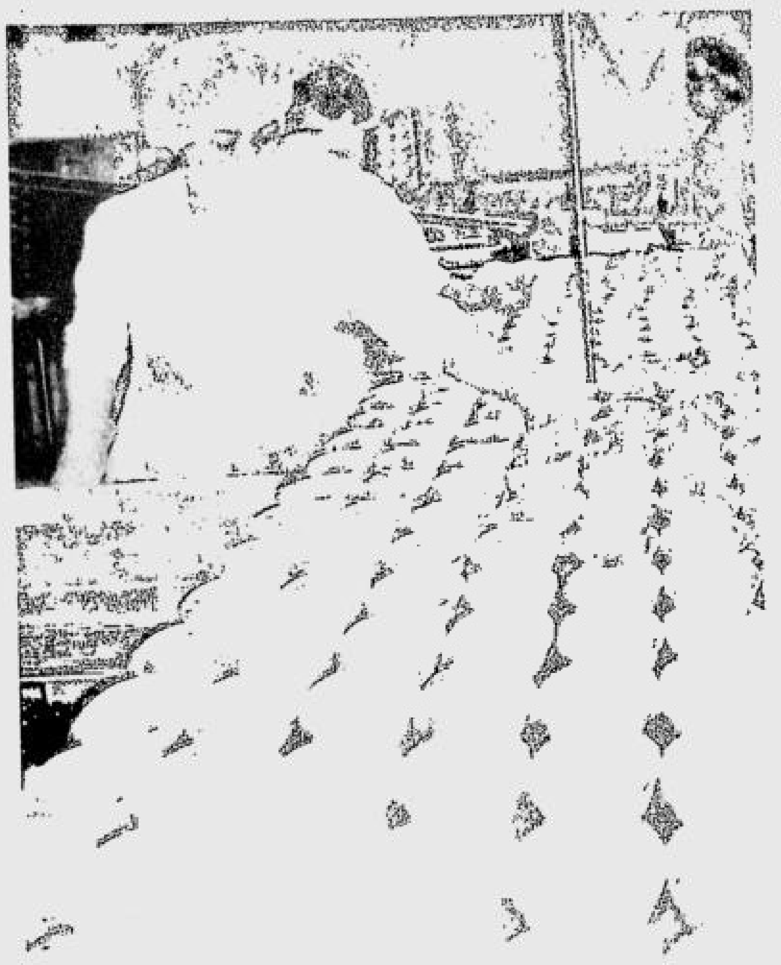
We were first briefed on the pleasures of dining for SIA passengers in all three sections with Singapore Airlines' super unique World Gourmet Cuisine, dahlings. SIA set up the International Culinary Panel in 1998 with nine major award-winning chefs of global stature. The mega panel works very closely with the airline's own chefs to create the most unique, yummy, to-die for dishes on board.

And there they were, all nine of them, to answer questions and educate us on what gastronomic meals were all about. Unfortunately, only one of the wine specialists made it, —**Michael Hill-Smith**, Australia's first Master of Wine, the world's highest wine connoisseur qualification. He is involved in all levels of the industry as consultant, commentator, judge and producer.

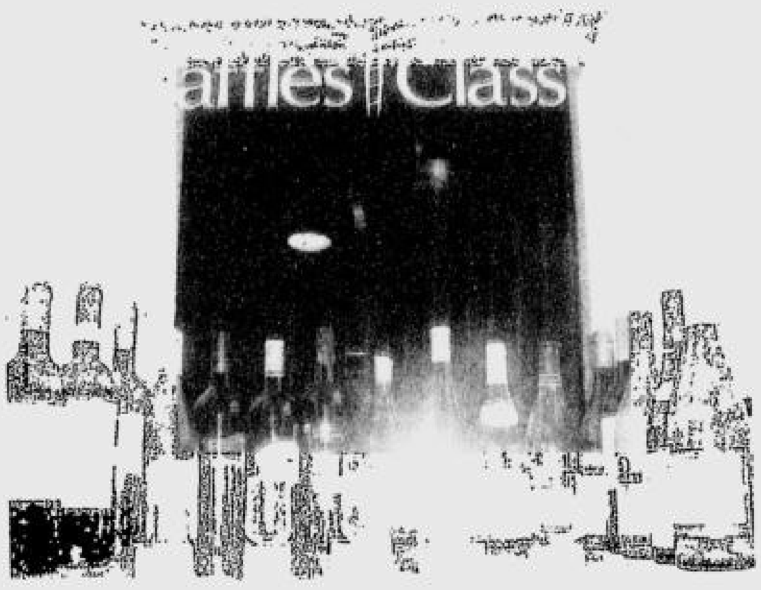
We learned the other two were in other parts of the world on wine-tasting jobs.

The panel's spokesman was **Herman Freidank**, who joined SIA in 1998 as food and beverage manager. Some of you might remember him as the executive assistant manager (food and beverage) at the Shangri-La Hotel Makati.

To be continued on Friday.

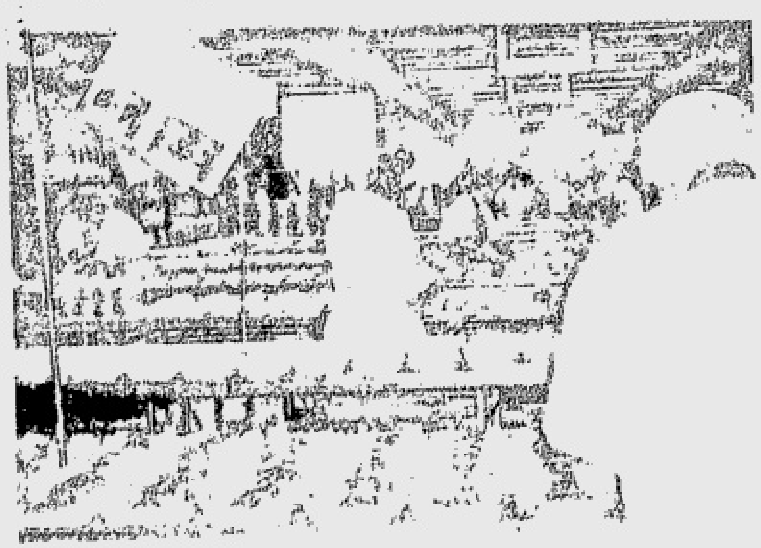


A SECTION of the Catering Center prepares meals only for the economy class.



TOP quality wines served in the Raffles Class section

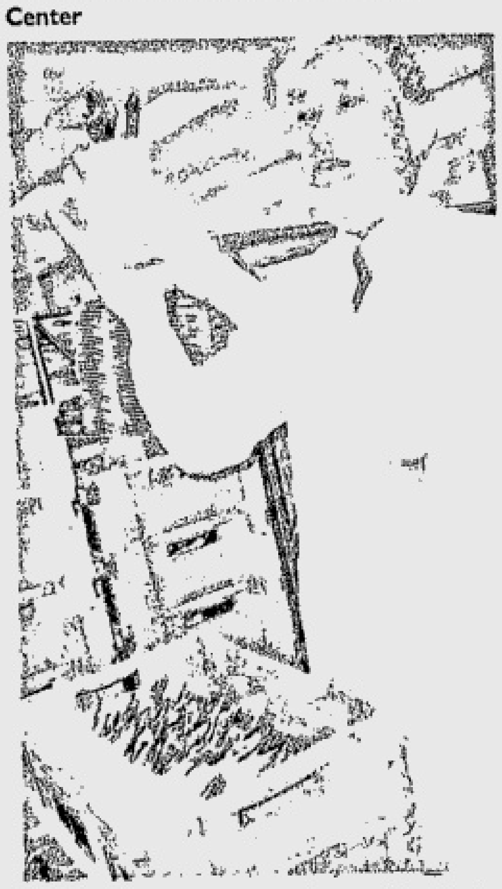
FRUITS from all over the world to be served on board arrive at the humongous storage house of the Catering Center.



TONS and tons of meals are prepared for Singapore Airlines flights around the world at the In-flight Catering Center.

NEW crew members train for emergency landing.

MOI, representing the INQUIRER and Philippine Tatler Magazine, with Margie Logarta, editor of Business Traveler Asia Pacific, during the tour of the Catering Center



OUR guide explains the minutest details of SIA's in-flight service

NEW recruits are taught such things as makeup, hairdo and general good grooming at the In-flight Center

Will ESP give correct test answers?

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

RAMIL Salon of Tagum, Davao del Norte, asks where he can buy a book on ESP for beginners. He has taken various exams but always failed because of time pressure. He wants to gain knowledge of ESP so he can guess the correct answers and pass the exams. He also wants to know if I conduct seminars in Davao.

Can ESP help?

Let me first clarify one very important thing. Though it is possible to get correct answers through intuition or ESP, it is not meant to be used that way.

ESP should result from the development of one's higher self or spirituality. It is not for material gain, for power or for influencing other people. If that is your objective, you will surely fail.

Now, to answer your question. One of my books, "Exploring the Powers of Your Inner Mind," contains exercises in telepathy, visualization and healing. It also gives important points on how to bring luck to your life and how to perform the chant for money. There is also a detailed section on how to meditate, an essential discipline for developing psychic powers.

The best way to pass an exam is to prepare and study thoroughly for it. There are no shortcuts. ESP will help you "guess" the questions, but you still have to learn the answers. You can't get the answers through ESP alone.

For your information, I will be conducting a one-day seminar on "Inner Mind Development and Self-Healing" in Davao City, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sept. 3. You may get in touch with Jesus Saplala at 0917-8313649 or Fr. Rey Roque at 0917-7054936 of the Diocese of Davao City for further details.

Confused

Reader Romina Banson seeks clarification on something in the above-mentioned book that she says confuses her.

"You say everything that happens on earth, including our desires and emotions, are already recorded in the *akasha*. If this is correct, how can visualization be effective? Suppose what you are visualizing is not in the *akasha*. Does this mean whatever you are visualizing, no matter how strongly, you will not get?"

There cannot be any inconsistency or contradiction between what you are visualizing or desiring and what is recorded in the *akashic* record because you write the contents of the *akashic* record through your thoughts, desires, intuition and action. It is your book of life and yours alone. Whatever is recorded there you created yourself.

There are several factors for visualization to be effective or become a physical reality. A person's will plays a big part. Also there is such a thing as timing. Though it may already be in the akasha, it may not be the right time for it to materialize in physical reality. It may also be subverted by a stronger subsequent desire or visualization.

Spirit guards

Tina Montevirgen has questions on treasure hunting. "Have you ever dealt with spirits guarding treasures? According to stories, these treasures have been buried since the Japanese era and they can only be claimed by the rightful owner or a deserving individual. Is this true? Are there really treasures buried in certain properties in the Philippines? Are these considered blessings or misfortunes? Are the people to whom these treasures are given chosen? Do they have to pass a rigid test or challenge before they can get the treasures."

I have never dealt with treasure hunting nor with spirits guarding them. But I am familiar with the stories. A number of people have already approached me about this.

It is apparently true that the Japanese, particularly Gen. Yamashita, buried here treasures he collected from several Southeast Asian countries when he was being pursued by the Americans. He prepared detailed location maps so he could retrieve them after the war. There were also stories that he killed Filipino prisoners and even Japanese soldiers on the spot so their spirits would guard the treasures till his return.

However, if I were you, I will forget about treasure hunting. I know several people who lost a lot of money—some even lost their family and friends—because of treasure hunting. I consider such an activity a waste of time and money, because if the treasures are not meant for you, you will not be able to get them.

Prayers for the dead

Reader Allan asks, "What happens to the spirit of the dead who is still being prayed for by his loved ones? Does this disturb or trouble him? Does he know that the living still pray for him?"

Prayers sincerely said help the spirit of the dead find peace. So it is a good practice. But prolonged and highly emotional mourning can disturb the dead and may retard their progress in the spirit world. Calling them for no reason at all is not good.

If a spirit wants to contact the living, it will do so in so many ways. If there is no manifestation from the dead, then it is at peace and we, the living, should be thankful for that. For your other questions, I suggest you read my book mentioned earlier.

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail jtlicauco@tri-isys.com or innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com. Visit www.jlicauco.shorturl.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program, 7:30-8:30 p.m. every Sunday.

Life is how you make it

From page C1

lifetime. What to do:

- Erase or set aside all your notions about old age, such as loss of energy, loss of libido, loss of dreams, loss of desirability.
- Adopt a new set of desires like these affirmations:

"I want to live longer."

"I want to be/remain healthy/healthier."

"I want a strong and clear mind."

"I want to be more active."

"I want to achieve more wisdom."

The old paradigm says the old body deteriorates physically, mentally and emotionally. The new paradigm says the new body can program all the energy it needs because automatic decline is not a given, it is not part of the programming.

Prescription for new life

- Eat frugally/moderately. Consume fresh, if possible organic, food.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get fresh air.
- Be positive in your outlook. Wear a smile on your face.
- Abstain from stimulants/drugs/sedatives.
- Get enough rest.
- Have a reasonably enjoyable sex life.
- Have a bowel movement daily.
- Get proper medical attention.
- Take 10 glasses of water daily. Juice your fruits and vegetables and drink twice daily.
- Forgive. Practice forgiving others as well as yourself.
- Take time to meditate and practice silence. Pray.
- Do good towards others.

Not older but better

On your second life, you are not older but better. You have the creative experience to recreate your life. Longevity is a goal and is not to be feared.

Replace your fear-motivated behavior with love-motivated behavior.

Affirmation

"My life is motivated by love and not by fear."

Wellness Rx

Drink up the goodness of water each day. Reconnect with this basic need. Before you drink that glass of water, say "I drink up for a long life."

Love and light!

Reference: "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind," by Deepak Chopra

ASHAMED OF YOUR DARK UNDER-ARMS?
(02)3744201
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Hearing is all . . .

From page C1

Savia has an FM receiver using advance wireless technology to transfer sound directly to the hearing instrument. The receiver is teamed with the sophisticated SmartLink transmitter, an intelligent, multi-purpose FM transmitter that overcomes distance by functioning as a remote microphone. It has a hands-free interface for operating Bluetooth mobile phone and also operates as a remote control for hearing instruments.

Designs

Phonak's new designs result from extensive research and field studies, as well as detailed analysis and evaluation of wearer's preferences.

"The materials we use are tough," said Burgin. "What's nice about these [products], we don't replace parts anymore except for batteries."

Savia is available in the following models: In the Ear, small enough to fit completely inside the ear; Completely in the Canal (CIC), which is the most discreet and convenient; and Behind the Ear, with single or two-color housing.

Burgin said a Savia was more client-friendly, a unit lasting a minimum of six years with an average of one to two repairs a year, depending on maintenance. "It doesn't need special care but the user should treat it well," he said.

RENE Burgin, Phonak's chief audiologist

According to Burgin, many hearing loss cases among Asians were due to accidents. Aging, he said, was another significant factor in hearing loss.

Phonak has a complete range of digital hearing instruments, high-tech specialty products and wireless communication systems.

Savia hearing aids are now available and are exclusively distributed by Manila Hearing Aid Center Inc.

E-mail the author at bbondoc@inquirer.com.ph.

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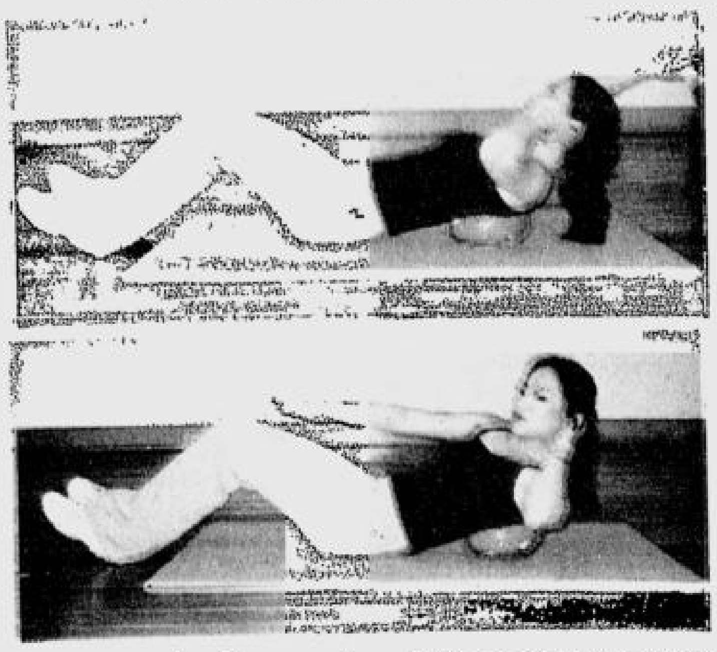
EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Oblique crunch on mini ball



THIS exercise firms and strengthens the abdominal muscles, particularly the oblique muscles that criss-cross the waist.

Equipment:

Exercise mat and small rubber ball

Exercise technique:

1. Place the mini ball behind your shoulder blades.
2. Legs should be hip distance apart. Place one hand behind your head and the other arm straight by your ear. This is your starting position.
3. Diagonally curl your torso and reach for the opposite knee.
4. Slowly return to the starting position and do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you curl; inhale on the return.
2. Support your head lightly with your fingertips to avoid pulling on your neck.
3. Stabilize your hips on the mat. Do not allow the hip on the side of the extended arm to lift as you curl diagonally.

Repetitions:

10 repetitions.

How 'Mars' and 'Venus' get fit

Part One

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

"MEN are from Mars, Women are from Venus" is the title of John Gray's best-selling book about the differences in male-female relationships.

According to Dr. Pamela Peeke, keynote speaker at the 2005 Idea World Fitness Convention, there were also distinct gender differences in the way men and women approached fitness.

Peeke illustrated the first difference with a cartoon of a slim, shapely woman looking at her imagined overweight reflection in the mirror and an out-of-shape potbellied man admiring his "macho" Mr. Universe appearance.

The woman thinks, "Look at those thighs. I've got to get rid of that tummy." The man thinks, "I don't look so bad. In fact, I look damn good."

Many women perceive themselves as less attractive than they really are and many men believe they are better looking than they actually are.

How does this relate to fitness? Since the No. 1 reason for working out is to improve appearance, many men don't see any reason to exercise because they think they are God's gift to women even though their bellies are hanging out and their chests have turned to jelly.

Frustrated

Many women, meanwhile, easily get frustrated with their exercise programs and prematurely quit because they base the results on their appearance, which they are constantly criticizing.

Peeke demonstrated the second difference by recounting her observations during a television documentary she was making about men and women getting fit.

The men did not mind being weighed or measured. Some of the women tried to back out of the show when they found out that their weight and measurements would be tracked. Others said they did not want to know how much they weighed even though, as Peeke pointed out, the audience would certainly know.

Women have emotional and psychological issues about their weight and size, while men do not. This is probably because women feel their worth in society is judged by how they look while a man's worth is judged by what he achieves.

In terms of getting started on a fitness program, Peeke found that the men simply wanted to know the bottom line: What was the least amount of exercise required to get the results they needed? Then, they would go out and "just do it." They didn't bother with what they were going to wear or what shoes they needed.

Procrastinators

Women, on the other hand, "just ponder it to death." Peeke said they took voluminous notes, they wanted to know every detail, and they procrastinated (sometimes for months) until they had the right outfit, shoes (had to be color coordinated), and even the right friend to accompany them. Consequently, some women never began.

Peeke claimed that women's senses were turned on 24/7. A man's brain was more compartmentalized and focused on the task at hand. Peeke said if you sent a man to the mall to buy a pair of jeans, he would head straight for the jeans store, pick out what he wanted, and be out of there in 30 minutes.

Send a woman to buy a pair of jeans and you would be lucky to have her back in three hours. That's because the sights, sounds, and smells of the mall would distract her from her "mission." She might come home with many packages but no jeans because she never even made it to the jeans store.

It is this sensory overload that makes many women spend more time talking and hanging out at the gym than they do working out. Then they wonder why they aren't getting results even if they exercise several times a week for several hours.

Even when a woman exercises at home, she is easily sidetracked from her workout by all the distractions around her. A man is more likely to do a straightforward workout at the gym or at home without getting diverted.

Stress response

Lastly, men and women have different ways of coping with stress. Men display the typical "fight or flight" approach to stress and let it all hang out by having a drink (or two or three) and spending time with their buddies for a game of golf or poker.

Women use the "stew and chew" approach. Their mouth is their first line of defense against stress. They talk things over with their girlfriends but they also have cravings for, as Peeke called it, a ménage a trois—you, Ben and Jerry (a popular American ice cream brand).

Most women use sweets and desserts to smother stressful feelings. Unfortunately, this only leads to more stress because of the resulting weight gain. Women need to learn other stress relief strategies that do not involve food like getting a massage, reading a book, or listening to music.

Next week: Physical fitness gender differences

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info.

Marathon rekindles Davaoeña's passion

By Crystal Joy Rebuca
Contributor

THE DAVAO leg of the 29-year-old National Milo Marathon was made special by 33-year-old Maria Estela Mamac-Diaz.

The Davaoeña was queen of the National Milo Marathon last year, besting all women racers from all over the country and becoming the first national champion from Mindanao.

Running has always been part of Diaz's life since elementary. But she had to abandon it to raise a family. The Milo Marathon allowed her to resume her interest in the sport.

"From the very first time the Milo Marathon was held here in Davao, I started joining. I stopped running for 10 years but my husband and I were jealous of runners staying in our house and bringing home trophies and prize money so we decided to join. I always (earned a) place but it was only last year that I finally won the National," she said in Bisaya.

Show of support

The mother of two said she would prefer to compete in the Milo Marathon than in the Southeast Asian games because she did not want to be away from her family. Although her win last year made her automatically qualified for the national finals, she ran in the Davao leg simply because of her love for the sport and to show her support for the other runners.

One of those runners is daughter Sacha, 10, who placed 8th in the 3K run of the Davao leg.

With both her parents into running, Sacha, not surprisingly, says she wants to follow in their footsteps, particularly her mother's.

Angelito Sibayan, a third year Criminology student of the University of Mindanao who will represent Davao in the finals in Manila after winning the 21K eliminations, started training when he was in second year high school. "Our training is every day... and then once a week we run from the UM Matina Campus to Eden," Sibayan said.

Jho-An Banayag, another member of the UM team coached by Harrish Patag, won in the women's division.

MILO champions Isidro Vildosola, Jho-An Banayag, Angelito Sibayan and Stela Diaz

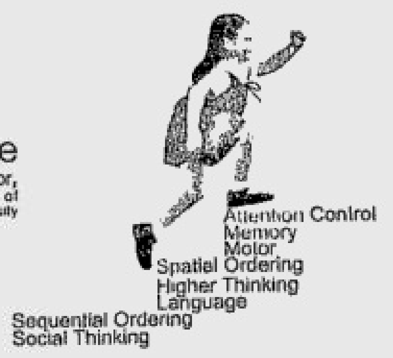
Dream fulfilled

General Santos elimination run winner Isidro Vildosola's right arm was amputated because of an accident. "After the accident, that is when I started running. I wanted to get scholarships through running because that was the only way I could finish my studies. Through God's help I was able to finish school and at the same time develop my running," he said.

He would like to participate in the Special Olympics. In the meantime, his goal is winning the 29th National Milo Marathon.

Nestle AVP and Milo brand manager Michelle Calo said, "We are now on our 29th year and we are optimistic that we can (continue to) promote the sport in the grassroots level and produce some of the country's best runners."

Elimination will be held in seven more cities before the final run on Oct. 9 in Manila.



Dr. Mel Levine
Pediatrician, Author & Director,
Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning, University of North Carolina

ACCELERATE
the Development of your Child's
Communication Skills

Before we send our children to school, we guide them through their ABC's, and teach them how to introduce themselves to a class. This is because we know how important communication skills are. Communication skills improve as a child grows, but how do we help our children develop these skills faster?

University of North Carolina professor and author Dr. Mel Levine says, to help your children develop their skills, you have to understand how their minds work and how they learn. Dr. Levine is one of the best-known education experts and pediatricians in the US; he has helped hundreds of children overcome their learning difficulties. He says that the mind, like the body, has different systems that are responsible for specific functions. These systems are dependent upon each other and work together to make learning successful.

Two of the eight systems of the mind related to one's communication skills are language and memory.

The **Language System** gives us the ability to distinguish differences in language sounds that affect the way we understand the things we read and hear. It enables us to start using new vocabulary which, in turn, improves the way we express our thoughts while speaking or writing.

The **Memory System,** on the other hand, enables us to remember. It helps us improve our skills in reading, writing and speaking by letting us remember the sounds that go with specific letters, the meanings and spellings of words, and the rules on how to punctuate and capitalize. It also helps us recall important things we've read and the facts that help us express our ideas better.

By understanding these two systems and knowing how they work together, you can help improve and develop your child's communication skills. Together with the other six systems of the mind, they help your child develop the skills necessary for him to excel in school. Dr. Levine says you should also be aware of your child's "neurodevelopmental profile", a list of his personal strengths and weaknesses. This profile is determined by Genes, Family Life and Stress Level, Cultural factors, Friends, Emotions, Educational Experience and Health. Providing the best environment and encouragement will aid your child in developing a positive profile that would help him learn better.

To further help your child get ahead, make sure you provide him with the best nutrition. Give him Progress Gold. It is the only growing-up milk for kids one year and older that contains the Gold Brain and Body Formula, a breakthrough blend of 25 essential nutrients plus Preformed DHA and AA that help accelerate brain and visual development. It also has Natural Mixed Carotenoids that help strengthen immunity, and Zinc that helps promote faster growth.

Help your child accelerate his development with the right nourishment. This, along with your best care, may help your child excel in school and bring out the inherent strengths of his mind's systems.

Dr. Mel Levine will be in the Philippines on August 12-13, 2005. Be there when he conducts the "Educating All Kinds of Minds" seminar at the Every Nation Building at the Fort, Taguig. Help your child accelerate his development by understanding how his mind works and how he learns. **Call 927-0143/926-5920 or log on to www.maximusinventus.com** to register.

Educating All Kinds of Minds
August 12-13, 2005
Every Nation Building (formerly VLI)
Fort Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig

Reference:
Levine, M. 2002 A Mind at a Time. Simon&Schuster, New York, Chapter 2, pp27-50.

Wyeth

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How is TB transmitted and how is it treated?

Take Charge Doc!

Tuberculosis is an infectious disease caused mainly by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that primarily affects the lungs. Transmission is mainly from person to person spreading by airborne transmission of droplet nuclei. Several factors are significant in determining if transmission will occur and if infection will progress to disease: (1) number of viable TB bacilli in patient's sputum and their concentration in the air, (2) aerosolization of droplet nuclei by the patient coughing or talking, (3) host susceptibility, and (4) length of time the host is exposed to the contaminated air. In some cases, infection may rapidly progress to disease. In others, TB may remain dormant, with a few "sleeping" bacilli kept under control by the host defenses. But lowering of the patient's defenses, by malnutrition, by another disease or just old age, may follow the dormant TB to multiply and cause disease. In most people, their host defenses either kill off all the bacilli or, keep them suppressed and under long term control. It is important therefore, to diagnose the sources of infection, especially patients with direct smear positive sputum and to make sure they complete effective treatment.

The treatment of TB involves the administration of appropriate drugs in specific doses, combinations and durations. Successful therapy requires that the patients comply with the prescribed regimen, rendering them non-infectious and cured, as early as possible. Treatment of newly diagnosed patients is a combination of 3-4 anti-TB drugs (Isoniazid, Ethambutol, Rifampicin, Pyrazinamide, and Streptomycin) in the first two months (initial or intensive phase) followed by two drugs for another four months (continuation phase).

This week's answer to our feature question on the transmission and treatment of tuberculosis was provided by our medical accredited specialist for six years from Lucena United Doctors Hospital, Dr. Sheila Tan Marino. Dr. Sheila specializes in Internal Medicine and has been practicing for more than six years now. She earned her degree in Doctor of Medicine in 1992, followed by her residency training for a specialization in Internal Medicine in 1996 from the University of Sto. Tomas. She later had her fellowship for a sub-specialization in Pulmonary Medicine in the same university. She is currently affiliated with several medical organizations such as the Philippine Medical Association, Quezon Medical Society, the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine College of Chest Physicians. MEDICard members may visit him for consultation at room 104, Medical Arts Bldg. of Lucena United Doctors Hospital, from Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm, 2pm to 6pm and on Saturday, 9am to 12nn.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

■ Entertainment / A28

Zsa Zsa's daughter says no family ties with Dolphy

■ News / A2

Tug-of-war over Faustino Dy heats up

■ World / A9

Discovery shuttle lands safely in California

■ Business / B1

Oil surges to new high of $64/barrel; markets watch Saudi, Iran

■ Sports / A21

Palace 'squeeze play' clips Pagdanganan's powers as chief SEAG organizer

Malacañang on attack mode

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Armand N. Nocum

AFTER weeks of enduring body blows from the opposition on the "jueteng" payola issue, Malacañang is now on attack mode and its mouthpieces are relishing every minute of it.

With two jueteng witnesses coming out in public decrying the opposition's move to influence their testimonies in the last four days,

MALACAÑANG/ A18

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Wednesday, August 10, 2005 ★★ 58 pages / 6 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 243 P18

Ping witness told: Testify at own risk

JOAN BONDOC

CAPT. MARLON MENDOZA, Lacson's witness, is an ex-bodyguard of Garcillano.

AFP claims intel officer engaged in P8-M scam

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE ARMED Forces yesterday warned the witness of opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson against testifying at the Senate, saying he would be in violation of military regulations if he did so.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief, also said at a news conference that the witness, Capt. Marlon Mendoza, had sold fake military documents and IDs for a considerable fee.

"We're just telling you what Captain Mendoza's true character is," Pascual said when asked why the AFP was discrediting the officer.

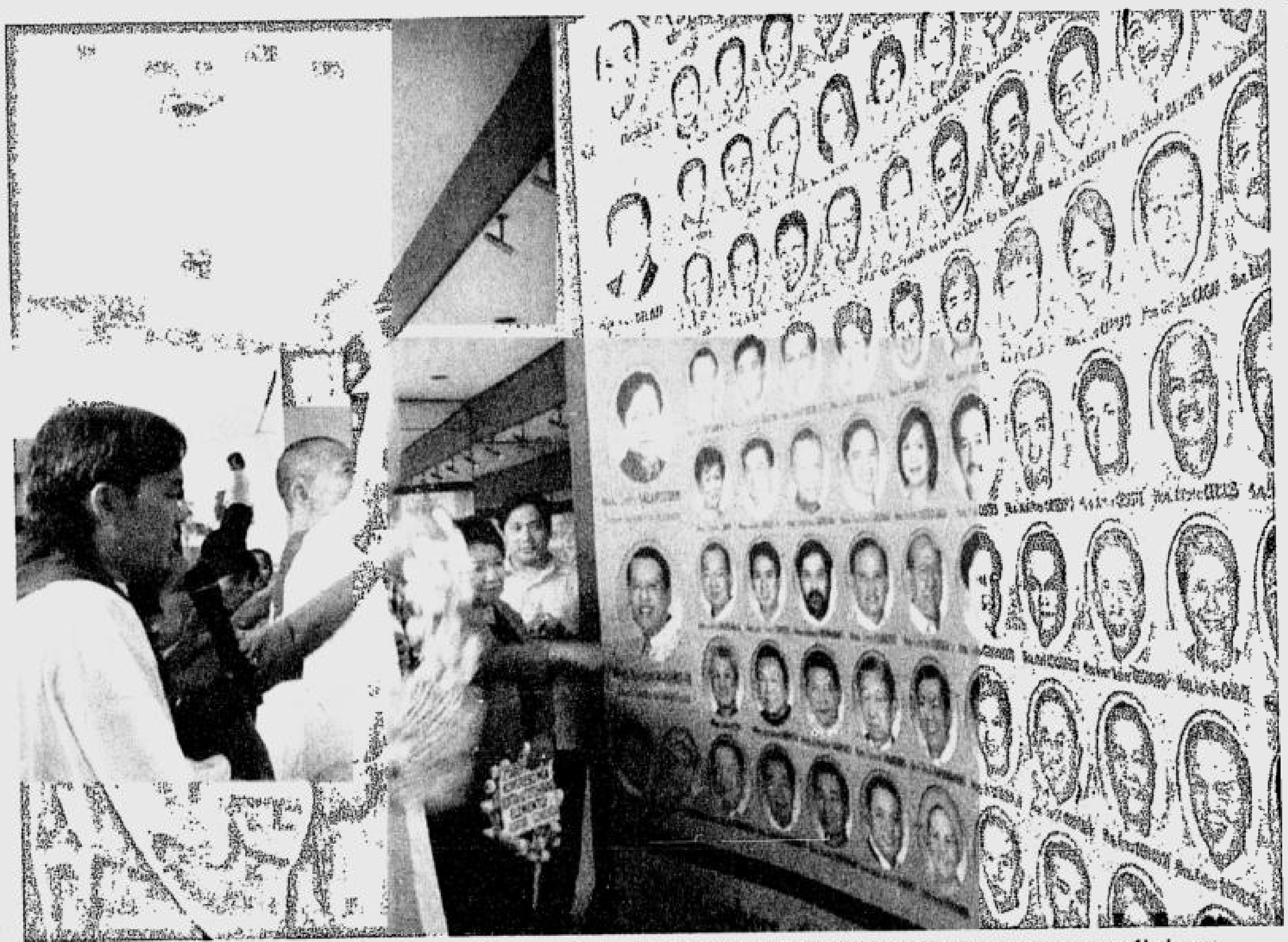
"With a captain doing a scam, falsifying documents amounting to at least P8 million, you be the judge what kind of man he is," Pascual said.

But Lacson warned the AFP not to destroy the witness and prevent him from testifying, saying this could prompt young military officers to launch a "destabilization" move.

Pascual said the AFP had been looking for Mendoza, an ex-member of the Military Intelligence Group 23 and chief security officer of then Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

An INQUIRER source had named Mendoza, 36, as the witness whom Lacson would present to corroborate Michaelangelo

PING/ A6



EXPULSION OF EVIL SPIRITS. Fr. Robert Reyes, with arm raised, and Fr. Raul "Puti" Enriquez sprinkle a generous amount of holy water on the photos of the members of the House of Representatives to clean up their negativisms toward the impeachment complaint. JOAN BONDOC

Holy water, incense exorcise House 'devils'

By Philip C. Tubeza

WEARING a white cassock and a purple stole, Fr. Robert Reyes, popularly known as the "running priest," yesterday "exorcised" the House of Representatives to rid it of evil spirits on the eve of impeachment hearings against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The House committee on justice starts today its hearings on the impeachment complaint filed by the opposition to determine whether it is sufficient in form and substance.

The complaint, which has so far obtained 41 signatures, accuses Ms Arroyo of culpable violation of the Constitution, corruption and fraud in connection with last year's presidential election.

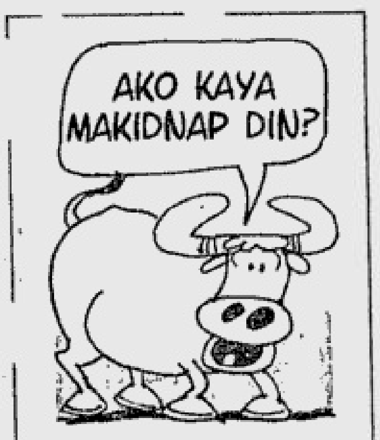
After the rite of exorcism, Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias blessed the impeachment complaint and 80 roses that signified the 79 votes required to transmit the complaint to the Senate for trial.

"The extra white rose goes to Speaker Jose de Venecia," said Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo who, along with proimpeachment lawmakers, attended the "Mass for Truth and Justice"

"If the Speaker would not en-

HOLY/ A18

SAYING IT WITH ROSES. After celebrating Mass at the Batasang Pambansa, Bishop Tobias blesses 80 impeachment roses for that "magic" number of 79 to be attained, plus one for Speaker De Venecia.



AKO KAYA MAKIDNAP DIN?

Harvard prof defends, rebuts alien kidnaps

THERE'S more to alien abductions than skeptics think, according to a psychologist at Harvard University.

People who have memories of being abducted by aliens dismiss the scientists who explain away the memories as illusions or fantasy.

They scoff at talk about hypnosis or the unconscious

HARVARD/ A6

Dengue here to stay; 12,308 taken ill

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NUMBER of Filipinos running dengue fever continues to soar despite strict sanitation measures put in place by local governments and the Department of Health.

Exactly 12,308 cases nationwide, including 159 deaths, have been reported from Jan. 1 to Aug. 3, according to a DOH update released yesterday.

The figures represented a 15-percent rise in the number of dengue cases registered in the same period last year. Back then, the DOH documented 10,690 cases.

Considering the current trend, government health experts are expecting around 20,000 cases by the end of the "dengue season" in October, according to Dr. Enrique Tayag, chief of the DOH National Epidemiology Center.

Tayag said the estimate was still a far cry from the 40,000 cases reported during the dengue crisis in 1998. He said the fatality rate (the number of deaths compared with the total number of cases in an area) was nowhere near the 2-percent threshold.

"It is not actually high but we are all working to minimize the number of infections," he told the INQUIRER on Monday.

Most of the fatalities died within 48 hours, suggesting that they had been afflicted with a "virulent" strain of dengue or were slow in seeking treatment, he said.

There was good news in Quezon City where Barangay Pag-asa

DENGUE/ A18

Untold story from the 'White House'

By Christian V. Esguerra

A WEEK before Michaelangelo Zuce revealed the alleged "La Vista payoffs," an election officer executed a handwritten statement about a similar incident he witnessed at the so-called "White House" in Clark Field, Pampanga, three days before last year's election.

The eight-page statement by Ferdinand Gerardo, election officer of Pampanga's San Simon town, was submitted last week to Archbishop Oscar Cruz's Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng (Crusade Against Illegal Gambling). A copy of the document was obtained by the INQUIRER yesterday from the Crusade on con-

UNTOLD/ A6

Cruz: I'm not an unwitting 'jueteng' foe

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he was not happy that his crusade against "jueteng" was unwittingly helping the opposition's efforts to bring down the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But Cruz said it was beyond his control if he or his crusade would be dragged into the political crisis.

He said it was not his problem if the political opposition was riding on his antijueteng crusade to attack the President.

"We have been against jueteng since 2001 and nobody minded us, especially the administration. Now that the jueteng issue has exploded, they say that we are destabilizers and antiadministration, and that we are being used

CRUZ/ A6

There's no clear winner yet in ARMM

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—Election officials yesterday pledged to investigate complaints of irregularities in the regional polls in Mindanao, with partial returns showing no clear winner yet in the races for governor and vice governor.

Initial canvassing results show that Lakas candidate Zhaldy Datu Puti Ampatuan was winning in his own province of Maguindanao.

THERE'S/ A18

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will have cloudy skies with rains becoming frequent over western Luzon. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/08/10/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONT PAGE

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Tug-of-war over ex-governor

By Michael Lim Ubac, Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio

JUST whose witness is he?

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles yesterday insisted former Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. would be testifying for the administration, belying House Minority Leader Francis Escudero's claim on Monday that his talks with Dy in the US had been "successful and fruitful."

Escudero, however, did not say if he was returning to Manila tomorrow with Dy in tow.

"Chiz (Escudero) has sent word that he had spoken to Governor Dy several times already and that he will have several meetings prior to his coming back on Thursday. As a matter of fact, I believe they are together right now," said South Cotabato Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio at a press briefing on Monday.

The Senate committees on public order and games will resume their joint inquiry into the First Family's alleged involvement in "jueteng," the illegal numbers game, at 11 a.m. today.

The hearings took on new life after opposition witness Michaelangelo Zuce testified that election officials were bribed with "jueteng money" by President Macapagal-Arroyo at her La Vista home prior to last year's election.

Dy, Zuce said, was present at the dinner along with Lilia Pineda, wife of alleged jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda who supposedly supplied the P30,000 given to each official.

Dy would be relied upon to reveal details or other circumstances surrounding the payoff, Custodio said.

Sen. Manuel Villar, public order committee chair, said the committees had not received confirmation Dy would be coming to the hearing.

Villar said the committees were not going to wait for him before wrapping up their investigation, unless Dy sends word he would be appearing in the next few days.

"I just don't want anybody to say that the Senate was afraid to summon him. We invited him but if he will not show up, we're not going to wait for him," Villar said in a phone interview.

Escudero, who flew to Los Angeles last week to meet with Dy, had sent word that the former governor would be coming home this week to testify on the supposed payoffs.

Dy, in a statement last week, said that he would "act accordingly" if he received a formal invitation from Congress to testify, taking into account his security in view of threats on his life.

"The opposition is hallucinating when it claims Dy may likely testify against President Arroyo," Nograles said.

He stressed that preempting Dy's testimony would be "an act of absolute desperation" by the opposition.

"The administration is confident the [former] governor won't allow himself to be used by the opposition. He [Dy] said so himself," Nograles said.

Custodio, however, claimed that Dy had already agreed to testify for the opposition.

"That's the assurance," she said.

To the question of whether the opposition trusted Dy completely, Custodio said: "If he's denying the meeting in La Vista, if he's defending GMA, then why wait (to be summoned by the) Senate and impeachment court? But it seems that there's more to it than that."

She added: "As long as he tells the truth, what he says will be all right. What really occurred during the meeting, that's the question, but we will be very happy with that statement because all of us here are just in search of the truth."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said Dy refuses to return to the country for fear of his life.

"What the Senate committees can do is to order his testimony to be taken on deposition in the US before a Filipino consul," Santiago said.

She said Dy would either impeach or corroborate Zuce's testimony.

"If Zuce is impeached, his eyewitness account would be worthless. If Zuce is corroborated, the burden of proof will shift to President Arroyo. Thus, Dy's testimony in the current Senate probe is crucial," Santiago said.

Some opposition senators, meanwhile, are planning to fly to the US this week to meet with Dy.

The minority bloc is arranging the trip of some of its members to confirm with Dy if he would be pressing ahead with his testimony at the Senate, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel said yesterday.

"We're sending a delegation to get in touch with him so we'll know for sure whether he's coming to the Senate investigation or not... not just by secondhand information," Pimentel said.

He did not say who would be in the delegation.

FAMILY THREATENED?

Palace exec under duress, says colleague

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

HIS FAMILY may have been threatened.

This could be the reason former Malacañang aide Ahmad Bayam turned around and belied the allegations made by witness Michaelangelo Zuce against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Bayam is the current chair of the Philippine Muslim Solidarity Council, which had earlier joined calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

"We think he was forced to testify against Zuce. We heard his family had been receiving threats," PMSC vice chair Ali Montaha Babao said yesterday.

Bayam, who was assistant secretary under former presidential liaison officer for political affairs Jose Ma. Rufino, has denied endorsing to Malacañang the appointment of former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, contrary to Zuce's claim.

In his affidavit, Zuce, who also worked under Rufino, had appended a memorandum dated Oct. 11, 2002, signed by Bayam endorsing Garcillano's appointment to Ms Arroyo. Garcillano and the President went on to record the infamous "Hello Garci" tapes purportedly proving electoral fraud.

In a press conference, Bayam said Zuce's statements were "all completely false and designed by him to bring down the present administration."

The problem for the PMSC is Bayam himself was talking about bringing down the administration just last month.

"Zuce exposed anomalies that could finally lead to the ouster of (Ms Arroyo). And here is our chairman saying Zuce is not a credible man," Babao had said in an earlier interview.

He said a common friend told him that Bayam wanted to "extend his apology to the group." He did not elaborate.

"We will ask (Bayam) to justify his testimony. If that is really his personal decision, he is not fit to be our chairman," Babao said.

In the group's press conference last month, Bayam himself announced they were aligning themselves with the group of retired Gen. Fortunato Abat in pushing for a revolutionary transitional council to take over from President Arroyo.

Bayam even threatened to push for a separate Republic of Mindanao if Ms Arroyo insisted on clinging to power amid the scandals rocking her administration.

"If she will not step down (with Vice President Noli de Castro), there will be massive movements to call for her resignation," Bayam had warned.

SC verdict on VAT seen next week

THE SUPREME Court yesterday started formal deliberations on whether to lift its freeze on an expanded value added tax, and a court spokesman said a final decision was possible next week.

While the 15 justices did not finish their debates and may need to meet again next Tuesday, a draft decision has been passed among them for their comments, court spokesman Ishmael Khan said.

"I think the court would still be able to come out with its decision on the case before the end of this month, hopefully by next week," Khan said.

"The worst-case scenario is by the end of the month," Khan said, but added he did not think it would take that long.

The broadening of an existing value-added tax (VAT) is at the center of the government's fiscal reforms, which are aimed at boosting chronically weak revenues and allowing the country to end its heavy dependence on debt to fund its budget.

But it will push up prices for consumers and businesses by ending exemptions on items including fuel and electricity. A Congress committee also gave President Macapagal-Arroyo the power to raise the VAT next year to 12 percent from 10 percent.

Petroleum dealers, minority lawmakers and a provincial governor have filed separate petitions against the expanded VAT.

Khan said the judges were focusing on two main arguments: whether the president can raise the tax rate next year, and whether Congress' bicameral conference committee can include provisions in the law that were not approved in the lower house.

For example, the VAT bill would also raise the corporate tax rate to 35 percent from 32 percent for three years, after which it would fall to 30 percent. This provision was not included in the version passed by the House of Representatives.Reuters

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Heed the surveys, Ramos tells GMA

By Cynthia D. Balana and Christine O. Avendaño

FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos on Monday night encouraged President Macapagal-Arroyo to rely on scientific surveys in order to improve her leadership and to determine the true sentiments of the people.

"To me that is the scientific method of determining public opinion on various important issues about the country, especially grass roots concerns," Ramos told reporters after speaking during the 20th anniversary celebration of the Social Weather Stations.

He said scientific surveys, like those conducted by SWS, were a "very accurate guide" of public opinion on various issues affecting the government and the people.

Ramos said he had suffered a double whammy in terms of negative ratings: one, in May 1995 at the height of the Flor Contemplacion case and two, in August 1995 during the rice shortage following typhoons that struck the country.

But his ratings later improved, he said, when he started addressing other important aspects of governance and turned the Philippines into a tiger economy of Asia.

Ramos also said that the surveys done before the President's State of the Nation Address (Sona) last July 25 were incomplete and inaccurate in terms of her future directions.

He agreed that the President should not be misled by surveys done within a limited geographical area. "As the people of Mindanao have very accurately said, Metro Manila is not the Philippines."

SWS President Mahar Mangahas discussed the latest SWS survey wherein the President's distrust rating "improved" from 51 percent to 46 percent.

"It just showed a slightly lower distrust but it's still distinct. In fact it's so small that I don't think it's worth analyzing it even," Mangahas told reporters on Monday night.

In the SWS telephone poll of 565 Metro Manila residents from Aug. 2 to 4, the President's distrust rating was at 46 percent, barely lower than the 51 percent reported in the July poll.

On the other hand, trust in her was only 22 percent, also slightly higher than the 19 percent rating she got in the previous telephone poll conducted from July 12 to 14 this year.

Malacañang, however, was optimistic that the President's ratings in the next surveys would improve since two jueteng witnesses had taken back their testimony that the First Family was involved in the illegal numbers game.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye made the assertion following the Pulse Asia survey showing that eight out of 10 Filipinos believe that some members of the President's family were involved in jueteng.

Bunye told reporters that the Pulse Asia survey, which covered the July 2 to July 14 period, was taken before jueteng witnesses Richard Garcia and Demosthenes Abraham Riva retracted their statements implicating the First Family in jueteng.

Bunye said the next surveys would most likely see "a drop in the number of people who believe the jueteng allegations against the First Family if they learn about the turnaround of these two witnesses."

Computers to unclog Sandigan

By Nelson F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN will get rid of the backlog of cases when it "computerizes its system" with the help of the United States Agency for International Development.

Justice Teresita de Castro, anti-graft court and concurrent Special Division chair, made the announcement as she reiterated an earlier Special Division order suspending the hearing of plunder cases of former President Joseph Estrada on Aug. 22, 24, 29 and 31.

She told government lawyers led by Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio and members of Estrada's legal defense team, lawyers Jose Flaminiano and Rene Saguisag, that during the suspended trial dates, members of the Special Division would be undergoing the Philippine Judicial Academy computer literacy training.

INQUIRER sources at the Sandiganbayan said 29 computer units are arriving this month while 57 other units, including laptops, were expected next month.

As of June 2005, the Sandiganbayan has 3,037 pending civil and criminal cases, including high profile plunder cases of Estrada and retired Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

NBI finally launches all-out manhunt for Garcillano

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has officially begun the intensified search for sought-after former Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

NBI spokesperson Auralyn Pascual said the bureau has assigned the NBI-National Capital Region office to take charge of the manhunt upon receiving the warrant of arrest from Congress on Monday.

"We have also relayed the directive to the bureau's regional and district offices nationwide," Pascual said in an interview with reporters yesterday.

Pascual added that the bureau would also ask Interpol to help locate Garcillano, who has reportedly left the country for either London or Singapore.

"Because we do not have extradition treaties with these countries, we would file an application to have Garcillano included in the Interpol's red notice or list of wanted persons," Pascual said.

Pascual had earlier clarified that there are no criminal charges filed against the Commissioner and stressed that the administrative warrant issued against Garcillano would only force him to attend the congressional hearing.

The Philippines has extradition treaties with the United States, Australia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Micronesia, Canada, Thailand and Switzerland.

Pascual explained that these treaties are used to extradite individuals with criminal charges.

The NBI spokesperson also said the bureau would forward all documents pertaining to the Comelec official to the Interpol main headquarters in France.

She added that 182 countries are members of the Interpol.

"The countries could act on the Garcillano case and help send him back to the Philippines," Pascual said.

The NBI spokesperson said that although the Bureau of Immigration had earlier stressed that Garcillano was not able to leave the country, they are "exhausting every means possible to locate the Commissioner."

Gov't serves notice of impending arrest of NDF leaders

By Volt Contreras

THE GOVERNMENT has notified the diplomatic community of the possible arrest of leaders of the National Democratic Front, two weeks after the leftist rebel group withdrew from peace talks with what it called a "crumbling" Arroyo administration.

The Department of Foreign Affairs briefed foreign envoys yesterday on the effects of the NDF's withdrawal and that of Malacañang's Aug. 2 decision to suspend the safe conduct passes of at least 97 NDF leaders and members.

Rebels losing the pass will either be arrested if they have unserved warrants or have their court cases resumed, said Foreign Undersecretary Rene Sarmiento, acting presidential adviser on the peace process.

These "legitimate" police and military actions will start Sept. 3, when the 30-day grace period has elapsed after the government served notice to the NDF about the suspension, Sarmiento told reporters after the closed-door diplomatic briefing.

"After Sept. 2, there will be arrests if the NDF fails to show a willingness to return to the negotiating table," the official added.

The pass was issued to accredited NDF personnel in 1995 under the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees or Jasig. It has been suspended by the government three times since – once in 1995 and twice in 1999.

Jasig was the instrument that allowed the rebel leaders to participate in the peace talks, the undersecretary explained.

"The Philippine government assures the international community that the rights of all members of the NDF, the Communist Party of the Philippines, and the New People's Army who may be apprehended shall be fully protected under the law," DFA Secretary Alberto Romulo told the diplomats in the briefing.

On July 20, NDF chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni announced the organization's withdrawal from the talks, saying it would rather wait for the "next administration."

The NDF pullout, the latest of many episodes that had stalled the 19-year-old talks, came with the mounting calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster over the "Hello, Garci" and "jueteng" scandals.

Jalandoni then predicted that Ms Arroyo "will not last very long" in power.

Asked who among the NDF figures top the list of those facing arrest with the Jasig's suspension, Sarmiento cited Jalandoni, his wife Connie Ledesma, Fidel Agcoili, Asterio Palima, and a "Jojo Magdiwa" – the last he believed to be a mere alias.

Romulo assured embassy representatives that despite this latest snag in the talks, the Arroyo administration will pursue the peace process through local government units and communities as well as through civil society.

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Pirating 'Harry'

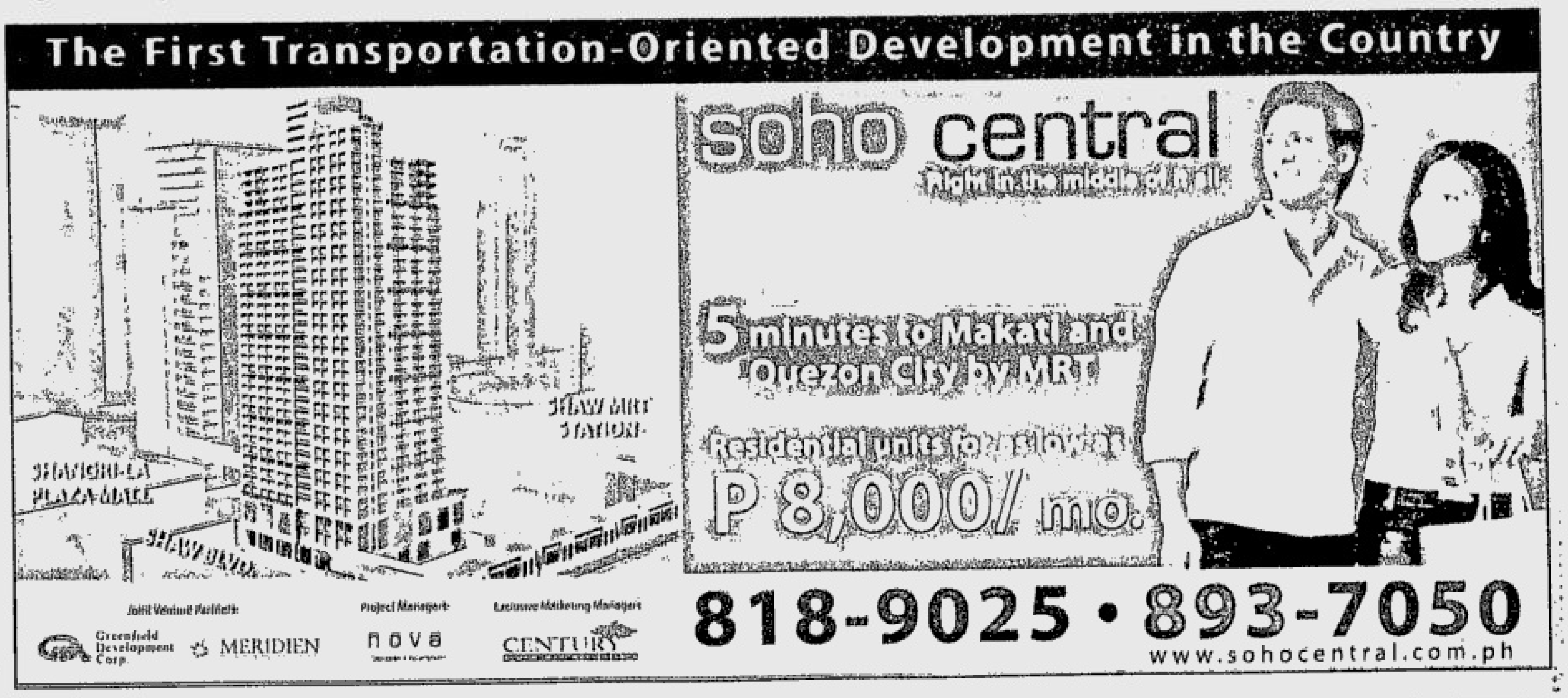
COPYRIGHT pirates in the Philippines have found a new way of copying the latest Harry Potter best-seller – selling the contents on computer discs in the sidestreets of Metro Manila.

"Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince," the sixth instalment of the popular boy wizard's adventures at the Hogwarts school of magic, was released on July 16 and has been enjoying robust sales in bookshops.

In the Philippines, copies have been transcribed in computer format and CDs can be purchased from street vendors for P300 to P500.

The discs, which can be read on any computer, sell for much less than the book which retails for about P1,500.

The Trade Department's Intellectual Property Office said they had not heard of the CDs and previously the only books being illegally copied in the Philippines were academic textbooks. *AFP*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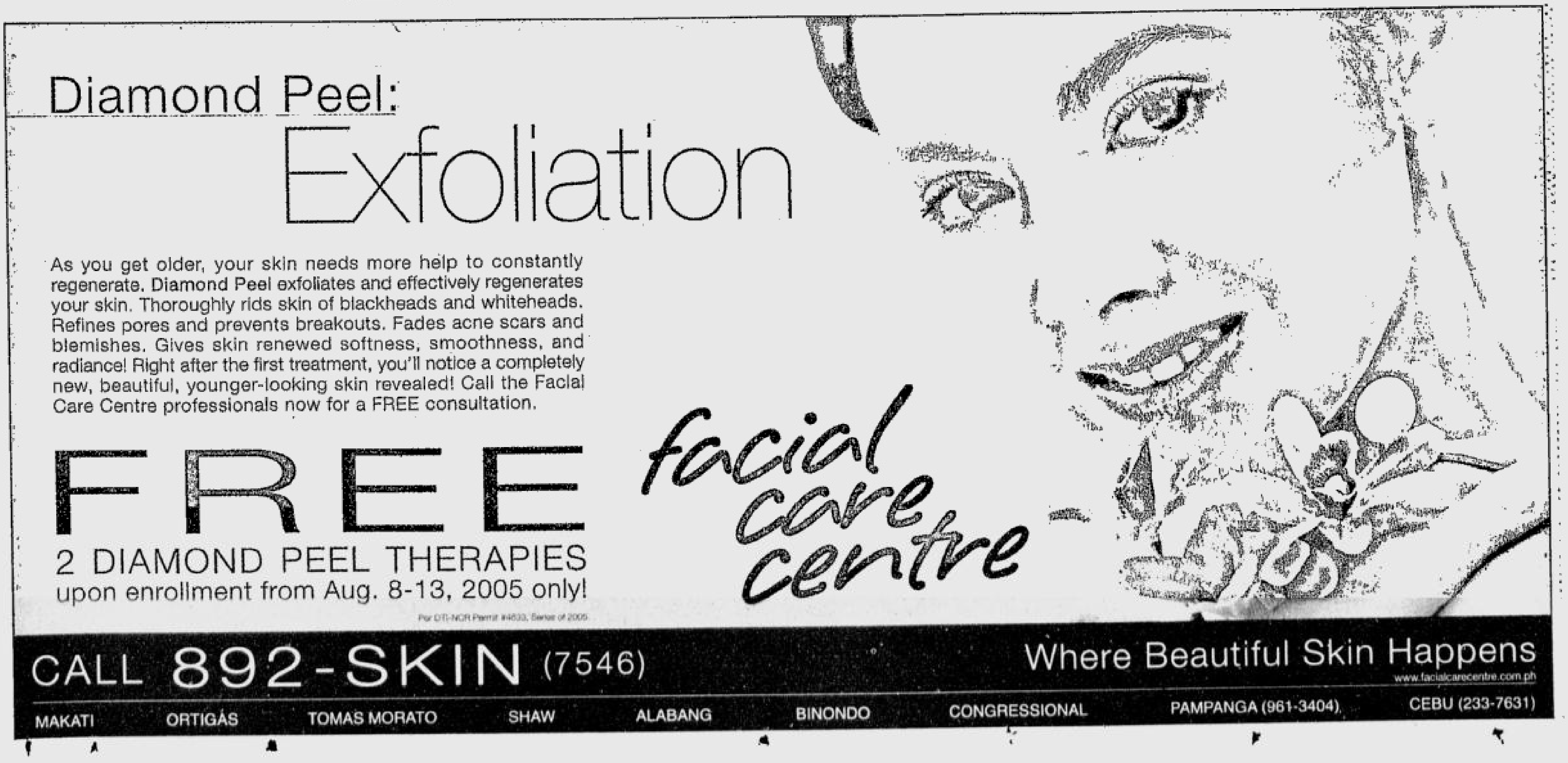
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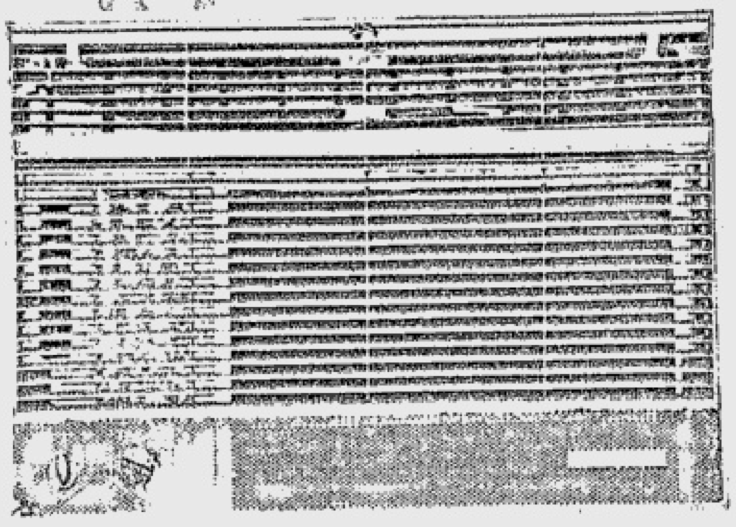

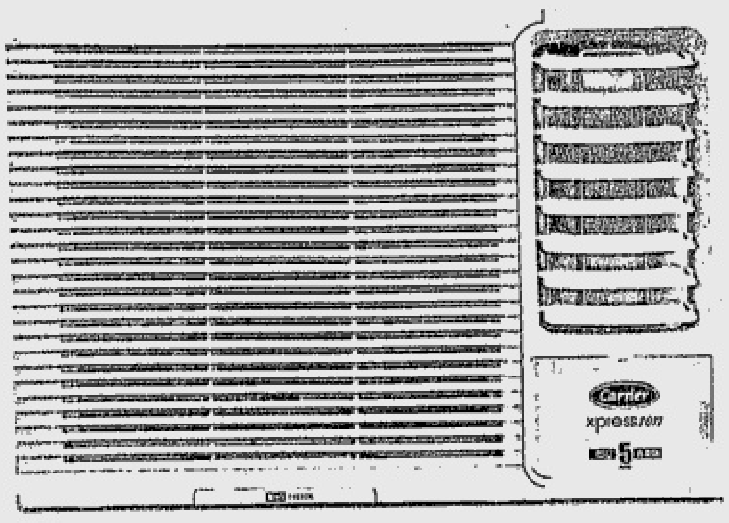

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Erap bares 'blueprint for progress'

By Nelson F. Flores

ESTRADA

FORMER President Joseph Estrada yesterday asked the public to support the "Blueprint for a viable Philippines" drafted by University of the Philippines academics and civil society leaders.

Estrada, in a statement, said the blueprint was the product of 20 round table discussions organized by former UP President Francisco Nemenzo, "at a time when the country's economic, political and social systems face imminent collapse due to misgovernance and unbridled corruption."

He said the blueprint includes viable options, which would be of enormous help in "putting our fiscal house in order."

The 68-year-old Estrada, who is facing plunder and perjury charges before the Sandiganbayan, said the blueprint would also improve the country's business prospects and the plight of the poor.

"With sufficient support from all sectors, the blueprint will go a long way toward setting our country back on the road to genuine progress," Estrada, who is detained in his sprawling rest house in Tanay, Rizal, said.

The blueprint, which was presented to media by representatives from the UP Office of the President, UP Third World Study Center and the UP League of College Councils, recommended the modernization of the agricultural sector and the purging of scalawags from military and police establishments, among others.

"The agricultural sector's importance in the country's development cannot be underscored enough and that is the reason why my administration redoubled previous efforts to modernize it. Food security cannot be achieved without ensuring support for this sector," Estrada stressed.

He added that only after the government has put in place these recommendations could it truly claim that the Philippines is on the road to genuine progress.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 10, 2005
St. Lawrence, Martyr

1st Reading: 2 Cor 9:6-10
Gospel: John 12:24-26

Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

"Those who love their life destroy it, and those who despise their life in this world keep it for everlasting life.

"Whoever wants to serve me, let him follow me and wherever I am, there shall my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."

Commentary

We turn today to John's gospel, the gospel of the beloved disciple, the one who will lay down their life for the strengthening of the faith of the community. Jesus is speaking of himself and his own suffering and death, but he is also speaking of all those who will come after him in the way of the cross, and laying down their lives, buried in the earth so that life and faith, and the presence of those who have loved will live forever. The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians (Didache) and we celebrate Lawrence, a deacon who cared for the treasures of the Church—the poor and refused to bow before the gods of Rome, dying and proclaiming the dignity and gift of love. If we are to serve Jesus, then we must lay down our lives daily in service, as practice, perhaps for the honor of laying down our lives literally in death. As we have lived, so we will die and rise with Jesus.

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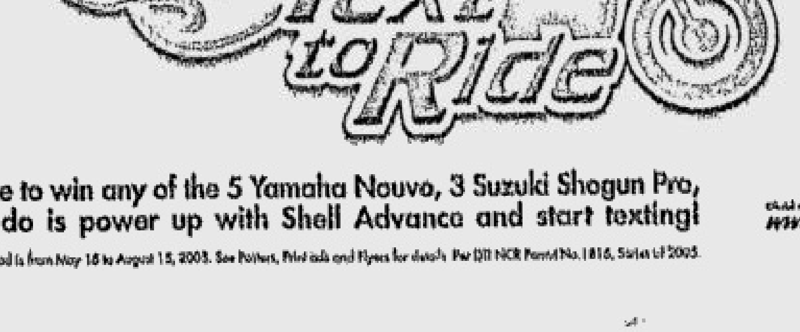
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Captain says Garci met Batangas gov before '04 polls

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BATANGAS CITY—"Jueteng" money changed hands before the 2004 elections, Capt. Marlon Mendoza told the INQUIRER last week.

By the captain's account, Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez met with then Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, whom Mendoza was then guarding, in April and May last year.

Mendoza said the meetings were held first at a private beach resort in Balayan town, and a number of times at Air Force One, a nightclub in Sucat, Parañaque City.

The nightclub is owned by Sanchez, according to Mendoza, but the governor has denied this.

Money changed hands?

Sanchez was named in the Senate inquiry into jueteng as one of the biggest gambling lords in the country—a charge that he has also denied.

Mendoza said Sanchez handed money to Garcillano during the meetings, but he could not say exactly how much.

"I couldn't get that close. First, because I knew that what they were doing was wrong; second, because it's not my job to sow intrigue. I was just there to provide security to Garcillano," he said in Filipino.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Sanchez vehemently denied having met with Garcillano or with any other Commission on Elections official during the 2004 campaign and election period.

"What could he (Garcillano) have done to help me?" Sanchez said. "Is he a registered voter here in Batangas?"

Asked if he knew Garcillano, Sanchez said: "No, I don't know him personally. But I know he was the Comelec commissioner assigned here in Southern Tagalog."

Garci emissaries

Garcillano reportedly spoke only with Sanchez, but sent emissaries to other Batangas gubernatorial candidates such as Charito Apacible, Dennis Hernandez and former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Reached for comment, Apacible and Hernandez both said they did not give in to the alleged demand of Garcillano's emissaries for money to rig the gubernatorial election.

The INQUIRER phoned Perez repeatedly but his mobile phone had been turned off.

Mendoza's story corroborated that of Apacible, who lost to Sanchez in the gubernatorial race.

Citing massive cheating, Apacible filed an election protest against Sanchez after the 2004 polls.

"We have a witness who wrote her own statement of how Garcillano and Comelec regional director Johnny Icaro of Batangas accepted bribes from Sanchez during their visits to Air Force One," Apacible said.

Sanchez also denied this.

Apacible said the witness retracted the statement supposedly because of fear for her life.

Icaro was mentioned twice in Michaelangelo Zuce's statement on Aug. 1 that President Macapagal-Arroyo had hosted a meeting of Comelec officials, former Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. and former Lubao Mayor Lilia "Baby" Pineda at the Arroyo house in La Vista, Quezon City, in January 2004.

Ping witness told: Testify at own risk

From page A1

Zuce's claim that Commission on Elections officials had been paid to ensure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in 2004. *(See related story above.)*

But the AFP yesterday jumped the gun on Lacson and portrayed his witness as a racketeer.

Pascual also delivered a warning: "It's his decision. But what I can say is, we have regulations in the Armed Forces, and if he will appear without proper authority from the [AFP], he [will be] violating AFP regulations."

Mendoza, however, appeared undaunted.

"Would you allow them to stop me from speaking out for truth and justice?" he said in Filipino in a text message sent to a reporter yesterday.

"Let us not be afraid to stand up for the truth. It's now high time to help our country change for the better. See you at the Senate," he also said.

Personal knowledge

At their own press conference later in the day, Mendoza's two lawyers confirmed that he would testify on his "personal knowledge" of how "jueteng" money was used in the alleged election fraud.

"I do not want to preempt the statement of Captain Mendoza, but it has something to do with the ongoing investigation about jueteng and also the so-called cheating in the election," said John Castriciones, who conducted the press conference with retired Col. Mariano Santiago.

An INQUIRER source earlier said Mendoza knew about Garcillano's operation to manipulate the election results in Ms Arroyo's favor, including the supposed handing of hundreds of millions of pesos to Garcillano by suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

The AFP brass ordered Mendoza's case files dug up yesterday, after the INQUIRER reported that the officer was Lacson's surprise witness.

In November 2003, Mendoza was relieved as sub-commander of MIG 23 of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (Isafp) for the alleged "mission order scam."

But the court-martial case against him and his former superior, Lt. Col. Nestor Saludo, and another MIG 23 member, M/Sgt. Valeriano Cartagenas, has not moved beyond pre-trial investigation since then.

The three were accused of selling about 2,500 fake mission orders and mission receipts in 2003, for which they reportedly earned at least P8.7 million.

'Floating'

Mendoza, a civil engineering graduate of the Technological Institute of the Philippines, joined the military in 1991 as a probationary second lieutenant in the Army.

He was promoted to first lieutenant in 1997, and to captain in 2001.

He was assigned to Isafp in 1998, and became assistant group commander of MIG 23 in January 2003.

In his purported text message, Mendoza said he was assigned to the General Headquarters Support Group, the usual holding post for "floating" officers, after he was relieved from Isafp.

He said his family had been harassed and "even bribed huge amounts of money" just to turn him over.

He said members of the Presidential Security Group and Isafp had been harassing his relatives and friends.

"I know they would discredit me, but I could not [accept] the fact they fooled the Filipino people. The electorate was cheated," he said.

Pascual admitted that military officers had begun to look for Mendoza, but said they were out to serve a subpoena for the pre-trial investigation.

"We're looking for him in his quarters [at Camp Aguinaldo] but he's not there. As of now we can't find him," Pascual said.

Personal request

According to documents that Mendoza is expected to present at today's Senate hearing, Garcillano personally requested that Mendoza be assigned to him as his chief security during the 2004 election.

Mendoza's appointment was approved by then Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, upon the recommendation of then Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo. The assignment was for six months.

Garcillano also assigned Mendoza to Zuce, the former Palace employee who earlier testified he was part of a special operation led by Garcillano and was present at the Arroyo residence in La Vista, Quezon City, when Comelec officers supposedly received bribes of jueteng money.

Mendoza has a picture of himself and Zuce somewhere in Mindanao dated May 14, 2004, election day.

Castriciones said Mendoza was recalled after his "stint in Mindanao" with Garcillano ended.

Both Castriciones and Santiago could not explain why Garcillano had specifically asked for Mendoza to be detailed to him.

'Undeclared martial law'

The two lawyers said Mendoza was bent on telling what he knew.

"The guy is really determined," Castriciones said. "He said he is doing it for truth and for justice, and he is very emotional because he really feels there are a lot of abuses and corruption in the government."

Castriciones and Santiago assailed the AFP for the supposed demolition job on Mendoza.

"This is undeclared martial law," Santiago said. "The fact that he is being destroyed even before he can testify is an indication that he will be prevented as much as possible [from testifying]."

Lacson, who is "sponsoring" Mendoza's appearance at the Senate, said the PSG prevented the latter's family members from leaving their house in Sta. Monica, San Luis, Batangas, last Saturday.

He said PSG men in three vehicles surrounded the Mendoza house.

"[The family was] cowering in fear. His father is paralyzed, and they were practically imprisoned in their own house," Lacson said.

He said he sought the help of a parish priest and a political leader to help ensure the family's safety.

A "mini people power" was held, which enabled the Mendozas to leave their home, he said.

"So we can very well see that Malacañang is in a panic. This is undeclared martial law," said Lacson.

But San Luis Mayor Rodolfo Mendoza denied to the INQUIRER that such an incident took place.

Pascual also said he was not aware of the incident.

Destabilization

Lacson aired a veiled threat.

"I must caution the AFP leadership that the junior officers are carefully watching the present political crisis that stemmed from the involvement of civilian and military officers in jueteng and election fraud," he said, adding:

"They should not underestimate the sensibilities of their own people during this critical time... This may lead to destabilization not only in the military but in the [whole] country."

Lacson said Mendoza could not be arrested by the military because he would immediately ask the Senate to place the officer under its custody.

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate public order committee investigating jueteng, said he would not allow the arrest of a witness under the care of the chamber.

Untold story from the 'White House'

From page A1

dition that full details, such as names of the participants, be withheld.

Cruz confirmed to the INQUIRER that Gerardo was one of the witnesses he was supposed to present in the next Senate hearing. "He backed out at the last minute," Cruz said.

Gerardo recounted that he and five other provincial officials of the Commission on Elections were gathered by a Pampanga mayor for a meeting at the White House with President Macapagal-Arroyo at around 8:30 p.m. on May 7, 2004—seven days before the presidential election. Gerardo quoted the mayor as saying that Ms Arroyo requested the meeting.

"*Salamat at nandito kayo. Kamusta na kayo? Aasahan ko ang inyong tulong para manalo tayo sa darating na halalan* (Thank you for coming. How are you? I am depending on your help in order for us to win in the coming election)," Gerardo quoted the President as telling them.

Gerardo said the President, two Pampanga mayors and Lilia Pineda, wife of suspected "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, then left the gathering and went to an office in the White House. After several hours, a man emerged and handed to each participant an envelope containing P20,000 in cash, Gerardo said.

Gerardo's narrative echoed that outlined on Aug. 1 by Zuce, a 30-year-old Malacañang operative. Zuce said 27 Comelec officials attended a dinner in the house of Ms Arroyo at the swank La Vista village in Quezon City in January—four months before the balloting—where she made an appeal for help in the vote. After she left the gathering on the lower level of the house, envelopes containing P30,000 were distributed to the participants, Zuce said.

Never happened

Ms Arroyo, engulfed in the worst political crisis of her 4-year-old presidency over election fraud charges and disclosures her family received jueteng payoffs, has denied bribing Comelec officials. Malacañang said the La Vista meeting that Zuce referred to never happened.

Unlike Zuce, Gerardo never got to tell his story in the Senate panel investigating jueteng—a P50-million industry that involves protection payoffs to police and politicians.

On Aug. 5, Gerardo and another election officer, Gilbert Palogan of Hagonoy, Bulacan, announced at a news conference they had rejected an opposition effort to recruit them to testify against Ms Arroyo in her impeachment trial. In exchange for their testimony, the two were offered money and US visas, they said.

Gerardo and Palogan said that after they dismissed the offer, made by a certain "General Yarcia," they and their families received threats, prompting them to seek the protection of the National Bureau of Investigation. NBI agents accompanied them at the meeting with reporters on Aug. 5.

Gerardo's statement, the original of which appeared to have been written on yellow pad paper, was submitted to Cruz's office through another witness now under the archbishop's protection, the INQUIRER learned. Along with it was a video containing the testimony he was supposedly preparing for the Senate investigation.

Bribed?

A close supporter of Cruz's group said Gerardo appeared to have been bribed to turn around. The source said he believed Gerardo approached Cruz in the hope of getting a hefty bribe from Malacañang trouble-shooters.

Gerardo's narrative also contained allegations that a top election official in Pampanga, who was also present in the White House gathering, was given P3 million, including two "imported and expensive" vehicles and a "mansion" in Angeles City—all courtesy of the President.

After the canvassing of votes at the municipal level a few days later, Gerardo said the provincial election official required him and the other poll officers to first proceed to his office before submitting the election returns to the provincial board of canvassers.

"We were all given an envelope containing P15,000 more or less before the election returns were transmitted to the provincial board of canvassers," he said.

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Cruz: I'm not . . .

From page A1

by the opposition," Cruz said.

"Even if the administration decides to use me, that is beyond my control. But I'm not letting myself be used. There's a difference between one who is unwittingly used and one who allows himself to be used," Cruz told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview Tuesday.

He reiterated that his crusade was not meant to unseat Ms Arroyo because "whoever the President is [would be] immaterial to the crusade."

Cruz is the national chair of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng.

"Only jueteng is material to us. If there is no more jueteng during the Arroyo administration, we will stop [our campaign]. Our aim is to free the country from jueteng," he said.

Not with Lacson

He said he was not working with Sen. Panfilo Lacson in looking for or handling witnesses against the illegal numbers game.

"That is impossible. I have been the one taking care of the witnesses—housing them, looking after their safety, asking for security for them, providing them food and accommodation," Cruz said.

He said a new witness with ties to the administration would surface but he declined to identify the person.

Cruz does not believe that the illegal numbers game will stop even if Ms Arroyo steps down from office. "It has been there long before she became president," he said.

Harvard prof defends, rebuts alien kidnaps

From page A1

processing of Hollywood scripts. And they hold their ground amid snickers from a public that thinks they are daft or psychotic.

They are neither, and their experiences should be taken as seriously as any strongly held exotic beliefs, according to Susan Clancy, a Harvard psychologist who interviewed dozens of self-described abductees as part of a series of memory studies.

In her book "Abducted: How People Come to Believe They Were Kidnapped by Aliens," due out in October, Clancy both refutes and defends these believers, and also discusses research into memory, emotion and culture that renders abduction stories understandable, if not believable.

Although it focuses on abduction memories, the book hints at a larger ambition: To explain the psychology of transformative experiences, whether supposed abductions, conversions or divine visitations.

"Understanding why people believe weird things is important for anyone who wishes to know more about people—that is, humans in general," she writes.

Sleep paralysis

Clancy's accounting for abduction memories starts with a not uncommon experience called sleep paralysis. While in light, dream-rich REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, people may wake up for a few moments and find themselves unable to move.

Psychologists estimate that about a fifth of all people will have that experience at least once, and some 5 percent will be bathed in terrifying sensations like full-body electrical quivers, a feeling of levitation, at times accompanied by hallucinations of intruders.

Although no one has studied this group systematically, Clancy suggests, based on her interviews, that they tend to be people who already have some interest in the paranormal, mystical arts and the possibility of extraterrestrial visitors.

Pop culture

Where do the green aliens with wraparound eyes come from? From the deep well of pop culture, Clancy argues, based on a review of the history of UFO sightings, movies and television programs on aliens.

The first "abduction" in the United States was dramatized in 1953, in the movie "Invaders From Mars," she writes, and a rash of abduction reports followed this and other works on aliens.

Abduction narratives often have another dimension that Clancy suspects may be central to their power: They give people a way to comprehend the many dispiriting things that buffet any life, and a deep sense that they are not alone in the universe.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Saudi Arabia braces for new terror attacks

RIYADH—Saudi Arabia intensified security Tuesday around foreign compounds in Riyadh after the United States, Britain and Australia warned that terror attacks may be imminent in the wealthy oil kingdom.

Britain and Australia said on Monday that terrorists were planning attacks in Saudi Arabia in the near future, a day after a US move to temporarily shut missions in the country pushed oil prices to record levels.

The spate of warnings over possible militant strikes came just days into the reign of newly enthroned King Abdullah bin Abdel Aziz over the world's top oil exporter, which has been battling Islamist violence for two years.

A Saudi official who did not wish to be named told AFP that "let them issue the warnings they want, as for us we have our own procedures that we follow in order to confront and prevent any terrorist operation."

Officers, backed by military vehicles, enforced strict security measures at foreign residential compounds and the diplomatic neighborhood where most western embassies and their staff reside in Riyadh, an AFP correspondent said.

The US, British and Australian embassies are located within the heavily-protected diplomatic neighborhood.

Heavily-armed soldiers manned two checkpoints at the entrance of the Hay al-Wahidain, the diplomatic neighborhood, to check vehicles and identity cards of passengers.

"Security has been heightened at the diplomatic neighborhood ... and this usually takes places after security warnings of terrorist acts," said an Arab diplomat who did not wish to be identified.

The Cordoba compound in northern Riyadh has been transformed into a bunker, with hundreds of meters of cement blocks and barbed wire protecting the residential complex.

The manager of the compound, which was the target of a terror bombing attack in May 2003, told AFP that security measures have been recently raised in and around the complex.

"We have received warnings from the British and US embassies asking us to raise security measures since Sunday," said the manager who did not wish to be identified.

He said the compound was currently largely empty due to the summer vacations during which women and children travel back home.

A Cordoba resident, an American who works as a consultant at a Riyadh bank, told AFP that "I don't feel scared in the compound because there are strict security measures." "But I have avoided going to commercial centers since the warning from the US Embassy. I go to work with one of my Arab friends," said the US resident who did not wish to be identified.

As for Saudi residents, life seemed to be proceeding as usual around the capital where traffic was normal.

"I do not think that anything will happen, as the terrorists have been hit hard by security forces, so I do not have fears for myself or my family," said Tayel al-Zawzan, the owner of a real estate company.

On Sunday, the US Embassy in Saudi Arabia said its premises in Riyadh and two consulates elsewhere in the kingdom will be shut for two days in response to an unspecified threat.

A day later, Britain and Australia—close allies of Washington in troubled Iraq—said they had "credible reports" that extremists were in the final stages of planning attacks in Saudi Arabia.

The US mission in Riyadh warned on July 20 that terrorists could strike again in Saudi Arabia which has been rocked by a spate of bloody attacks—many of them against western targets—attributed to al-Qaida terror militants in the past two years.

World oil prices struck fresh record high points on Monday, exceeding $64 in New York, following the security worries in Saudi, which produces about 9.5 million barrels per day and has the capacity for an additional daily quota of 1.5 million.

AFP

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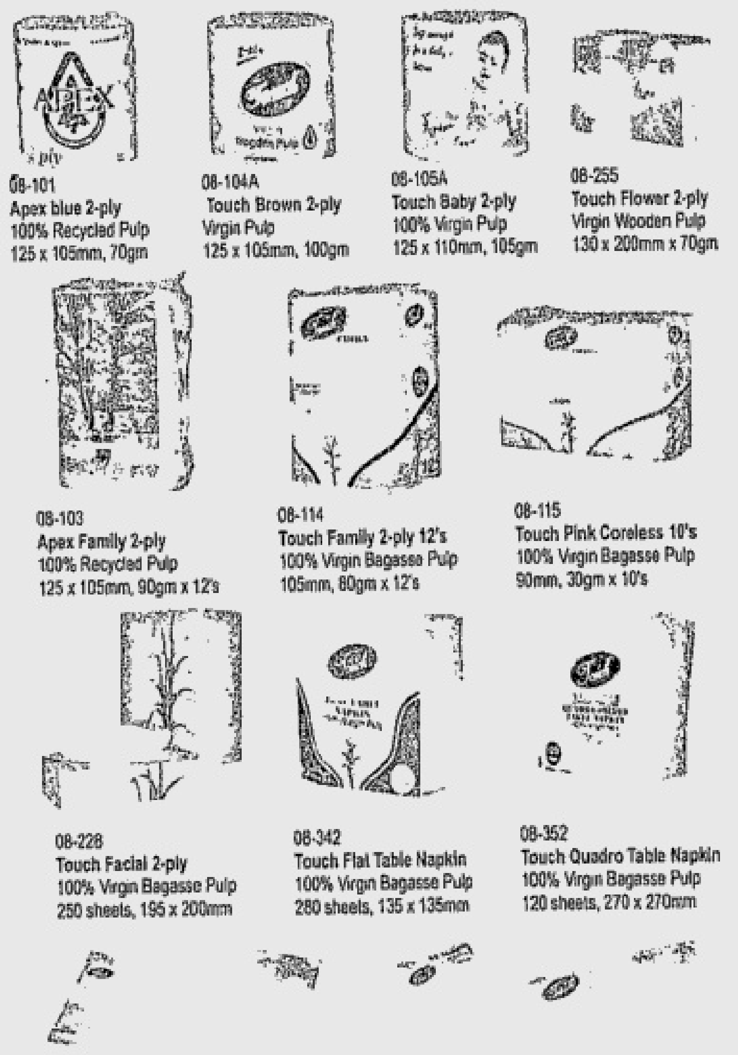

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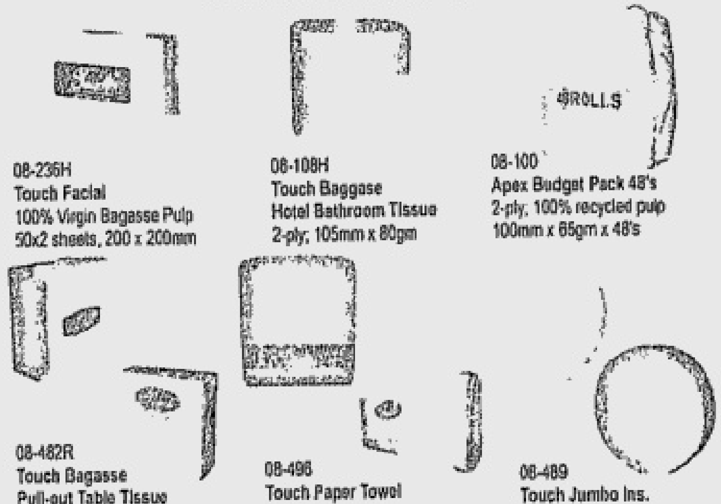

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2 UN officials accused of kickbacks

UNITED NATIONS—The former head of the UN oil-for-food program, Benon Sevan, was accused on Monday of receiving nearly $150,000 in kickbacks, and another UN official was arrested on charges of pocketing hundreds of thousands of dollars from UN contractors.

The UN-established Independent Inquiry Committee, headed by former US Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker, said in its third interim report that Sevan, who ran the $67 billion humanitarian program for Iraq, and Alexander Yakovlev, a former UN purchasing office, should be prosecuted.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan lifted both men's diplomatic immunity and Yakovlev was arrested on the orders of federal prosecutors of the US Southern District of New York.

Yakovlev immediately pleaded guilty to wire fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering arising from getting "several hundred thousand dollars," the federal complaint said. He was released on bail. Quick guilty pleas are often an indication of cooperation with prosecutors.

The Volcker panel, in its report, accused Yakovlev of pocketing more than than $950,000 from contractors not connected with the oil-for-food program. But it said he tried to solicit a bribe on one contract bid for the program.

The report was the first to accuse UN officials of outright corruption in connection with the program.

"These are senior officers of the United Nations," South African Judge Richard Goldstone, a commissioner on the panel told Reuters. "It is serious for any organization to have senior officials benefiting illegally." Annan's chief of staff, Mark Malloch Brown, told a news conference that the United Nations last month had alerted the US Attorney of wrongdoing by Yakovlev and was working with the Manhattan District Attorney's office on complaints against Sevan.

The Volcker report said Sevan's finances had been "precarious" before the alleged wrongdoing. Sevan has vigorously denied the charges.

The Volcker panel was commissioned by Annan to examine charges of corruption in the program, designed to ease the impact on ordinary Iraqis of UN sanctions imposed in August 1990 after Baghdad's troops invaded Kuwait.

The program began in December 1996 and ended in 2003, when the United States invaded Iraq and ousted President Saddam Hussein, who himself had skimmed off money on illegal oil sales and kickbacks, most of them outside the program.

Sevan, 67, who served in the United Nations for 40 years, has denied any wrongdoing and said in a letter to Annan on Sunday he was being made a scapegoat and that the charges were "false." He is in his native country of Cyprus.

The report said Sevan worked with a cousin of former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, Egyptian Fakhry Abdelnour, who owned a small oil trading firm, called African Middle East Petroleum (AMEP).

This firm transferred $580,000 to the account of Fred Nadler, the brother of Boutros-Ghali's wife Leia. Of this amount, Nadler then deposited in cash $147,184 to the New York bank accounts of Sevan and his wife, the report said. Boutros-Ghali was secretary general from 1992 to 1996 when the oil-for-food program was set up. He has been questioned by the Volcker panel but has not been accused of wrongdoing. *Reuters*

'Gardeners' steal $65M in Brazil

BRASILIA—Thieves tunneled into a Brazilian Central Bank branch to steal $65 million, officials said Monday. The country's biggest-ever bank heist was one of the largest in the world.

Thieves penetrated the Banco Central branch in the northeastern city of Fortaleza over the weekend after digging an 80-meter tunnel, the bank said in a statement.

They carted out 13.5 tons in notes without setting off alarms, police said.

"There were movement sensors in the safe and security cameras, which were not activated," police said.

Police said the thieves appeared to have made off with at least $65 million.

Banco Central said the robbers opened five containers with 50-real notes, each worth $21.60.

The robbers operated from a nearby house where they created a fictitious gardening company, which allowed them to get rid of earth they dug without raising suspicion, police said. The tunnel was four meters underground.

Brazil's previous record bank heist took place in 1999, when robbers made off with 37 million reals (16 million in today's dollars) from Banespa bank in São Paulo, according to Folha Online.

The tunnel was lined in plastic and had electric lights and a floor.

Police speculated that the gang must have had about 20 members, but did not immediately say that they had questioned any suspects.

"They worked for several months," police said. "The gardening company was working since March. They had sophisticated equipment, including (global positioning systems) and experts in math, engineering and excavation," they said.

The Brazil robbery is topped by a 1987 robbery in Knightsbridge, central London, of $72 million. *AFP*

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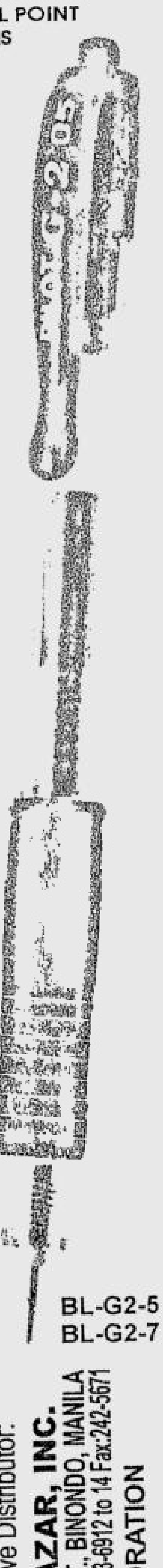

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US Air Force Lt. Col. Maria Carl (right), flanked by Nasa Public Affairs Officer Dave Drachlis, points to a radar screen which shows rainclouds near the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, Aug. 9. REUTERS

Discovery lands safely in California

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE—Discovery and its crew of seven glided safely back to Earth on Tuesday, ending a riveting, at times agonizing, 14-day test of space shuttle safety that was shadowed by the ghosts of Columbia.

Discovery swooped through the darkness of the Mojave Desert and landed on the Edwards runway at 1211 GMT, well before sunrise. It marked the conclusion of the first shuttle reentry since Columbia's tragic return.

The detour to California came after thunderstorms in Cape Canaveral, Florida, prevented the shuttle from returning to its home base.

"Congratulations on a truly spectacular test flight," Mission Control said once Discovery came to a stop. "Welcome home, friends."

"We're happy to be back and we congratulate the whole team for a job well done," Commander Eileen Collins replied.

The inherently dangerous ride down through the atmosphere—more anxiety-ridden than normal because of what happened to Columbia two and a half years ago—went smoothly. No problems were immediately reported by Mission Control.

Held up a day by bad weather in Florida, the shuttle soared across the Pacific and over Southern California, passing just north of Los Angeles on its way to Edwards. Nasa adjusted the flight path in order to skirt Los Angeles because of new public safety considerations in the wake of the Columbia disaster, which rained debris onto Texas and Louisiana.

Discovery's journey, which began with a liftoff on July 26, spanned 219 orbits of Earth and 5.8 million miles. *AP*

We just had to wait, sub crew recalls ordeal

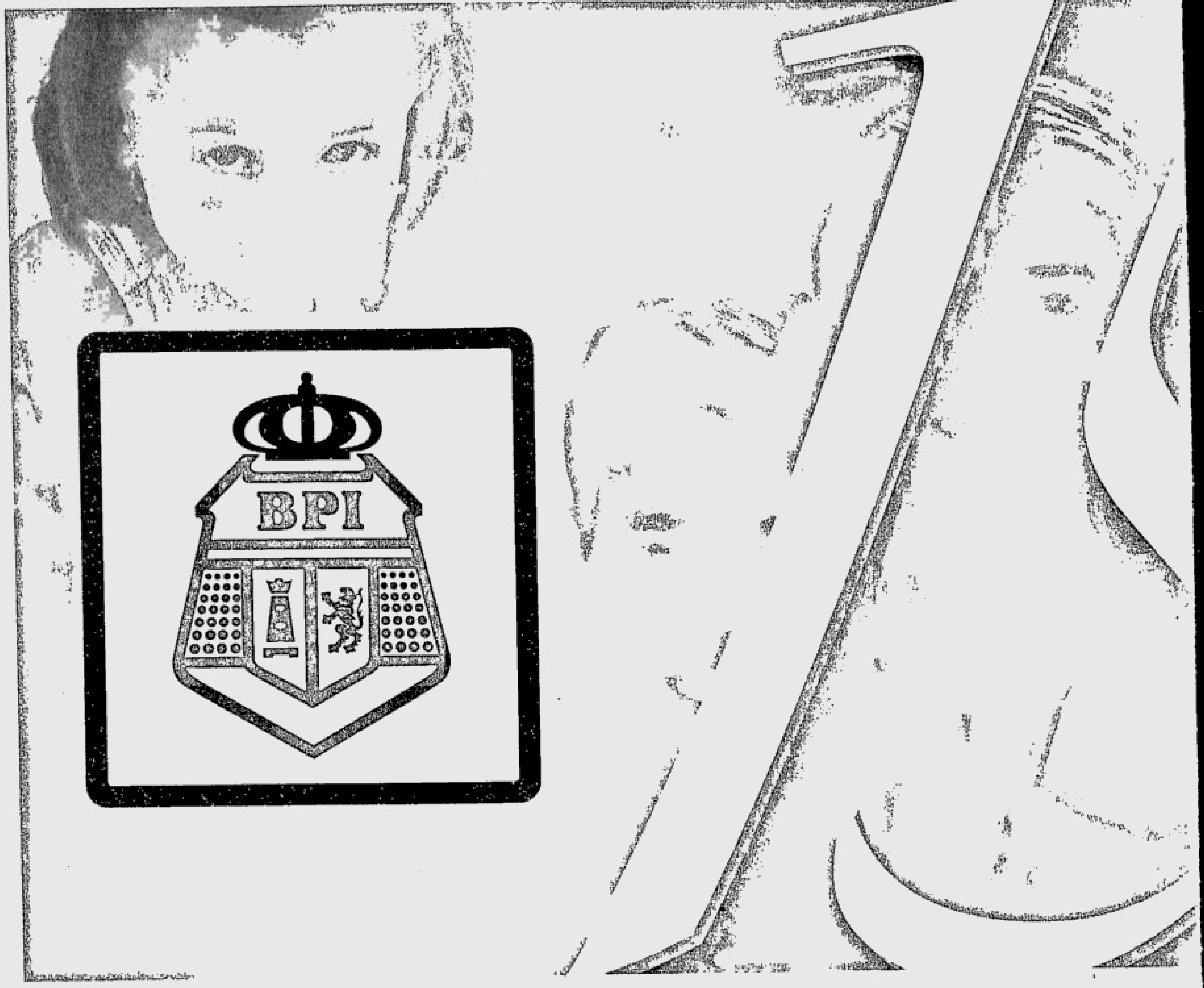
PETROPAVLOVSK-KAMCHATSKY, Russia—In the pitch dark, lying flat on their backs and under orders to breathe as lightly as possible, the crew waited.

They started writing farewell letters to loved ones as water supplies dwindled and the air thinned in the claustrophobic mini-sub entangled in undersea cables.

When a British vessel finally freed the sub, it became clear just how close they had come to death: in six hours, their oxygen would have run out. For the crew, freedom came when they opened the hatch and inhaled rich, fresh sea air.

They looked a bit bewildered when they stepped on shore hours later—the deep green of Kamchatka's trees and the clamor of journalists were a sudden burst of color and noise after 76 hours trapped in the hushed darkness, listening to their hearts and minds race.

"We understood we were trapped. We just had to wait for a decision. When they said that they've put everything into action, we lay flat and began to wait," said Gennady Volonin, an employee of the company that made the AS-28 mini-sub who was on board with the six crewmen. *AP*



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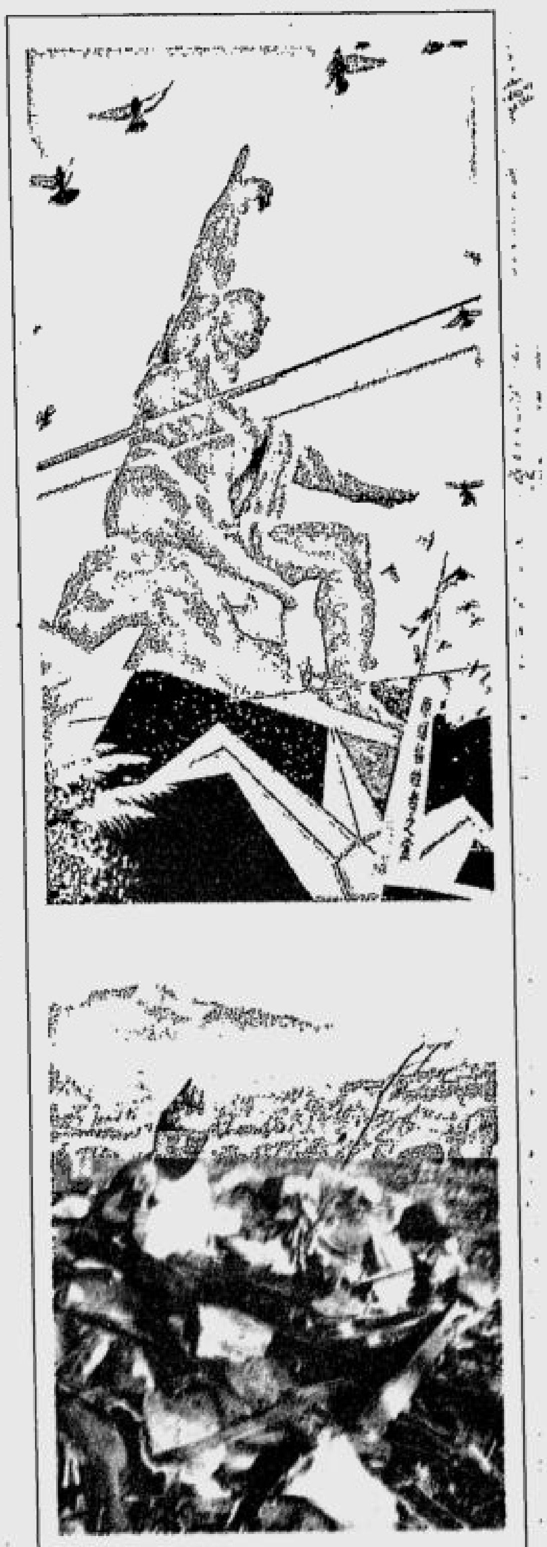

NAGASAKI A-BOMBING Doves fly over the Peace Statue (upper photo), the symbolic statue in hope of world peace, at the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki, Japan, Aug 9. Lower photo shows battered statues of the Buddha sitting on a hill above a razed valley in Nagasaki in this Sept. 24, 1945 file picture. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Saddam trial in 2 months

DUBAI—Saddam Hussein will go on trial within two months on charges related to a mass killing of Shi'ite Muslim villagers in the village of Dujail in 1982, an Iraqi judge said on Monday. "The Dujail case was referred to the criminal court and, God willing, a date will be set and within 45 to 60 days we will see the first session," investigating judge Munir Hadad told Arabic satellite television channel Al Arabiya. If convicted, Saddam could face the death penalty. *Reuters*

Bomb suspects charged

LONDON—Three suspects in the failed July 21 London bombings were formally charged with attempted murder. The suspects, most dressed in standard prison navy sweat shirts and gray sweat pants, were led from their cells through an underground tunnel into the adjacent court building for separate hearings. Muktar Said Ibrahim, 27, Ramzi Mohammed, 23, and Yassin Hassan Omar, 24, were ordered to remain in custody until Nov. 14 on charges of attempted murder, conspiracy to murder, possessing or making explosives and conspiracy to use explosives on July 21. They face life in prison if convicted. *AP*

N. Korea food shortages

SEOUL—North Korea faces a serious food shortage because the country probably won't meet its agricultural production target for this year, the World Food Program warned Tuesday. "My sense is that we have a crisis in front of us that requires the international community to respond and provide resources so that we can do our work," said James T. Morris, executive director of the UN agency. North Korea has relied on foreign aid to feed its 23 million people since disclosing in the mid-1990s that its government-run farm system had collapsed. A resulting famine is believed to have killed some 2 million people. The WFP tries to feed about 6.5 million North Koreans—more than a quarter of the population. *AP*

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KING HISTORY

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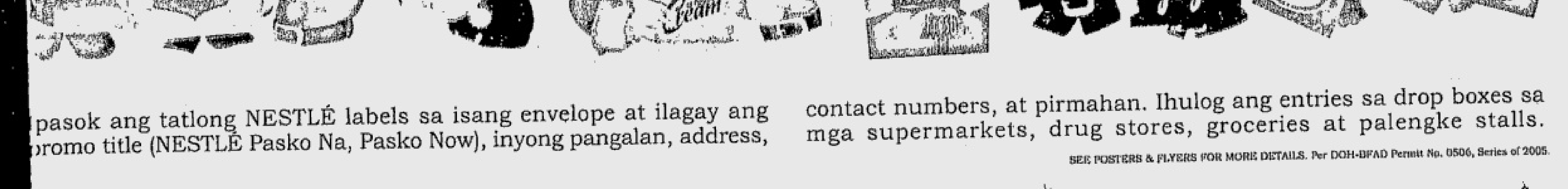

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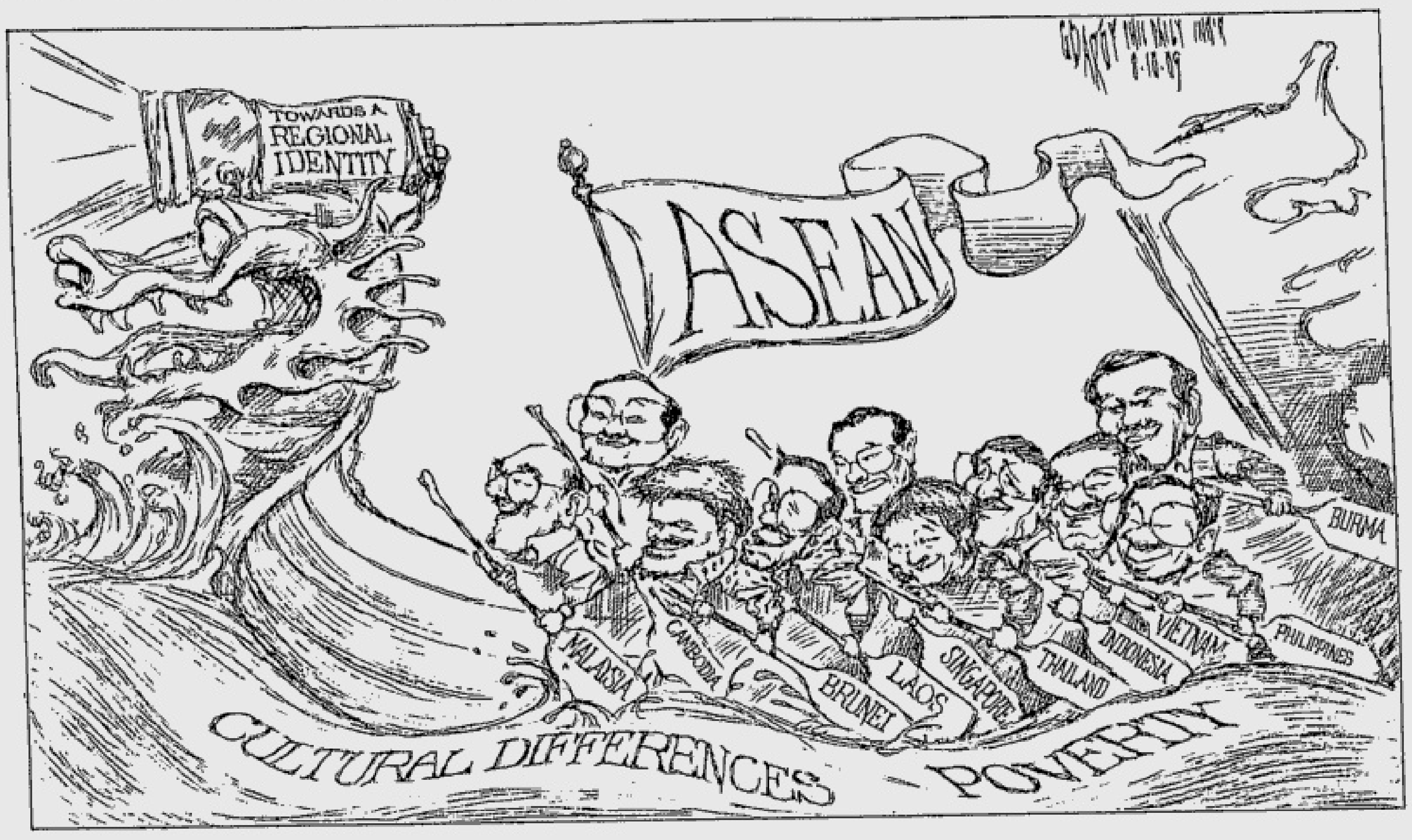

Tangled web

EDITORIAL

A TANGLED web of charges, countercharges, witnesses and counter-witnesses is all the country has to show for all the efforts of its leaders. No institution has emerged unscathed and unsullied. The administration is presenting—and demolishing—witnesses with as much viciousness and enthusiasm as the opposition, while the Catholic Church, the military, the police, media and civil society have all gotten into the act, in one way or another. Everyone has a witness, and everybody else has found a way to destroy that witness.

It is not our role to play prosecutor for either side, but it is our responsibility to point out the depths of irresponsibility and ruthlessness our major political players have sunk into. One side presents someone, only for that person to retract his story or modify it to the extent that his testimony becomes hopelessly muddled. Large sums of cash are just some of the considerations that are allegedly dangled. The use of police power, legal threats and personal appeals add to a general picture of power being used for the sake of power, and not in the search for the truth or the greater good. What is happening now serves as an indictment of the low regard in which the major players hold the public. Innuendo and slander are replacing facts; demolishing—and not building up—a case is the name of the game.

The public knows that when a witness bursts into tears, begging the forgiveness of the First Family, the tears weren't inspired by a sudden call to greatness, but most likely by a promise of cash to make crying worthwhile. The public also knows that when a witness with a large number of police officers hovering in the background steps forward to demolish the testimony of another witness, that demolition is inspired as much by fear of the policemen's guns as it is by a desire to tell the truth. The truth, such as it is, is only this: that both sides regard it as something that can be changed and modified at will.

The personal nature of the charges and countercharges is increasingly reflected in the persons perceived to be behind them. There is the President, with her loyal lieutenants moving heaven and earth to demolish hostile testimony. There is the opposition, moving with equal resolve to keep producing witnesses who will testify at least until new witnesses can be produced. On a certain level, it is perhaps more understandable to see the President and her people, moving with such ferociousness, since the life of the administration is on the line. It is less understandable to see opposition leaders virtually abandoning all pretense to either objectivity or statesmanship.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson has warned that if President Macapagal-Arroyo wants to make this a personal match, he would gladly accommodate her. After being accused of being the main mobilizer of witnesses against the President, Lacson has vowed to redouble his efforts to produce damaging witnesses.

The problem is that Lacson is a senator, and belongs to a body that everyone expects to hear the charges leveled against the President. We have heard time and again that an impeachment is a political process, that it isn't expected to be composed of completely impartial individuals, but neither is it expected to be a body devoid of even the appearance of having an open mind.

Public opinion has spoken out strongly in favor of the impeachment process. While some sectors have called for senators who have clearly expressed a position unfavorable to the President to inhibit themselves, this call has not been taken up by the majority. The public knows better than to expect a fair hearing of the administration case from the likes of the Estradas, mother and son, for example. Their hostile questioning will be par for the course, their vote, a foregone conclusion. But even the Estradas have resisted the urge to volunteer to do the job of the House of Representatives, which is, if it resists the temptation to throw out the impeachment complaint, to prosecute the case before the Senate. There is partisanship, and there is such a thing as crossing the line. Lacson has exhibited both.

This week should see the debate over the complaints in the House heating up. It should also mark the start of a period of preparation and reflection in the Senate. Few institutions get a second chance to prove themselves capable of living up to the highest, instead of the lowest, expectations of the public. The Senate, unless denied that opportunity by the House, will have that chance.

How to create a million more legal jobs

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WOULD you believe that President Macapagal-Arroyo's anti-*jueteng* czar is a former jueteng lord, that the man she assigned to stop the illegal numbers game was a jueteng operator himself? As the saying goes, it takes a thief to catch a thief. But Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, GMA's anti-jueteng czar, has admitted that he is through with jueteng, that he quit cold turkey, just like a drug addict who realizes his addiction is a shortcut to ruin and decides to quit, period. Puerto Princesa is now one of the few cities and municipalities that are jueteng-free. And if he can do it, Hagedorn told the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday, other mayors can do it, too. All that is needed is the will to stop.

That is why the President chose Hagedorn, who is chair of the League of City Mayors, to be her anti-jueteng czar. He doesn't like the monicker, noting that the last Russian czar and his family were massacred by the Bolsheviks. Besides, he doesn't have any police muscle, just him and a few others tasked with eliminating a long-running cancer that is now in the terminal stage. So instead of using police muscle, he is going to use "friendly persuasion" on his fellow mayors. Jueteng cannot survive in any place if the mayor doesn't want it, he said. Which is an indirect admission that many mayors are involved in the numbers game.

So instead of arresting jueteng lords and their thousands of *kabos* and *cobradores* (who will impoverish the government that has to feed and build more jails for them), Hagedorn will persuade his fellow mayors to finally stop jueteng in their localities because that is the right thing to do. In fact, that is the first of the three recommendations he will submit to the President early next week. The second is to find alternative livelihoods for the thousands of *cobradores* and *kabos* who will be rendered jobless by the elimination of jueteng. The third is to suspend the mayors of cities and municipalities found to still have jueteng.

Sorry to inform all the jueteng coddlers, but legalization is not one of Hagedorn's recommendations. His assignment against jueteng, he said, is a four-letter word: STOP. So he will stop it, not legalize it. And his assignment involves stopping only jueteng, not other forms of gambling. So don't blame him if, after jueteng, other forms of gambling proliferate.

In fact, Commissioner Michael Coronel of the Anti-Jueteng Task Force told the Kapihan that when jueteng was first reduced a few years ago, drug-dealing and addiction increased. The displaced jueteng workers have to turn to other means of livelihood to support their families, he said. They may turn to agriculture next, it was suggested, planting a crop called marijuana.

What he did in Puerto Princesa, Hagedorn said, was to give other jobs to those displaced by the stopping of jueteng operations. He employed them as members of Bantay-Dagat, Bantay-Gubat, etc.; hence, they have become more useful citizens. Other mayors can do the same thing, he said.

Those who argue that jueteng provides employment are only half-right, Hagedorn said. Jueteng saps the economy of any locality where it thrives. Far from jueteng money recirculating in the city or municipality, three-fourths of it is actually taken out of the locality.

Of the day's collection of bets, Hagedorn explained, half goes out of the area to pay government officials and policemen as bribes. One-fourth is taken by the operator as his profit. Only one-fourth goes back to the people in the form of winnings of bettors and commissions to the *cobradores* and *kabos*. This one-fourth gets smaller and smaller every day as more and more money are taken out of the locality.

One more thing: the bettors must be given an alternative to jueteng, otherwise they would just turn to *masiao, monte, sakla, cara y cruz* and other forms of gambling. Jueteng actually gives the poor people "hope." After they place their bets in the morning, they are sustained the whole day by the hope that, when the *cobrador* comes that afternoon, he would bring the good news that they had won. When they don't win today, there is always tomorrow.

Isn't lotto of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office just another form of jueteng with another name? I asked. Except that it cannot replace jueteng for several reasons:

1. The lowest bet in lotto is P10, whereas a peso or even 50 centavos will do in jueteng.

2. One has to go to a lotto outlet in town to place his bet whereas a jueteng *cobrador* goes to your house, even your bedroom or kitchen, to get your bet.

3. Although a lotto prize can be in the millions of pesos, you have to wait for weeks or months to have a winner. In jueteng, however, there are scores of winners every day. And that is what sustains the jueteng bettors—the hope that before the sun sets that day, they will be richer by a few thousand pesos for the few pesos that they bet that morning.

Is it not possible for the PCSO, I asked, to lower the price of a lotto ticket to P1 and employ the displaced jueteng collectors to sell tickets house to house on commission basis? That way, the collectors will continue to have a means of livelihood.

A great idea! Hagedorn exclaimed, adding that he would recommend that to the President and talk to the PCSO people about it right away.

He estimated that about a million people are employed by jueteng. Instead of creating jobs, GMA will eliminate a million jobs. "With your proposal," he joked, "GMA can claim that she just created a million more jobs."

Crimes

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT an insight into the crime GMA committed in the elections on my way to UP last Saturday. It was early morning and I was driving my son to the UP College Admission Test. The road leading to the Oblation told a story about the legions of Filipino kids who wanted a berth in arguably the best university in the country and unarguably the cheapest. Or of Filipino parents who desperately wanted to see their kids there. I was one of them.

Though it was just past 6 a.m., the road leading to the Oblation teemed with cars, taxis, jeepneys and kids walking along the sidewalks holding umbrellas aloft to fend off lashing rain. Traffic crawled. I reminded my son not without exaggerated drama how lucky he was to be at least riding in a car with a most solicitous father at the wheel. He laughed mirthfully. I added to this my near-obligatory parental exhortation for him to take his studies more seriously, money being hard to come by these days, and to make every centavo invested in improving his mind count. He laughed mirthfully even more.

Five hours later, I picked him up and asked him how the exam went. He said it was OK, except for the subject to which the building he took the exam in was dedicated—Math. I asked him when he would know the results, and he said that according to the exam officials it would only be in February next year.

And here's the part where GMA comes in: The thought entered my mind that after a couple of months I could maybe call up some friends who were UP officials to ask them how my son fared. Every year, you hear parents complaining about why their children failed to make it to UP when their children reported to them having breezed through the exam. Every year, you hear parents wondering if some favoritism or discrimination creeps into the choice of who among the hundreds of thousands of youth across the country get to join the lucky few who enter academic heaven. So I thought maybe I should call up my friends so as, to paraphrase GMA, to secure my son's grades.

The presidency and a place in UP may look like the difference between heaven and earth, but if that is so, then the heaven is not the presidency and the earth a place in UP. It is the other way around. Between acquiring power and acquiring knowledge, the more heavenly, or blissful, display of covetousness is to be found in the latter. That is the only thirst worth having, the thirst for knowledge. Not the thirst for power, though in some people that is truly beyond slaking. But easily a place in UP for one's kid takes on the proportion of winning the presidency, or indeed the lottery, for most parents in this country. It assures the best education for one's kid for five times less the price of education in an exclusive college. Of course, you won't be able to appreciate that if you can afford to stay in $20,000 suites in Las Vegas. But for most of us who live by honest toil, getting a kid to UP has "this way to paradise" written on the signposts.

I banished the thought from my mind immediately however. I did not call my friends, nor will I call my friends, to know how my son fared in the Upcat for the most compelling reasons.

To be sure, if I had done so, or if I would do so, my sin would be infinitely less grave, or lethal, than GMA's. One, there is no ban against calling up UP officials to inquire as to how your kid did in the entrance exams. There is only propriety to prevent you from doing it. But there is a very clear ban against a President calling up a Comelec official to inquire on how one did in the elections. There is the law to stop you from doing that.

Two, my friends are not likely to construe my inquiry as an appeal for them to do something to improve my son's chances. And even if they did, they would not do it, they would reprove me for insinuating so. But Garcillano, who proudly announces he learned his dirty tricks from Marcos' election hatchet-man Leonie Perez, is a known blackguard. When GMA called him, it was with the clear understanding that he would undertake to improve GMA's chances at the polls.

Three, I would not dream of asking them to change the scores. And they are not in a position to cheat anyway. GMA did not just dream it, she did it. There is the tape to show the conversation was a totally dishonest one, a plot to defraud the voters. Garcillano was in a position to cheat, and did.

These monumental differences notwithstanding, I did not call up my UP friends, nor will I call them up, because it is simply not right to do so. Call it *delicadeza*, call it decorum, call it a sense of right and wrong, call it all of the above, but one simply doesn't do these things. It is wrong, it is unfair, it is, however borderline, a form of cheating. It is unfair to the other parents who have no access to UP and cannot make the same requests. It is unfair to the other kids who, all other things being equal, may be discriminated against and miss a crack at the bat. It is unfair to my friends upon whom I will impose unduly, to my school, which by the way is not UP and from which I did not graduate, and to myself for stooping low. I do something like this, what business do I have talking about right and wrong and suggesting to the youth in particular how they might comport themselves?

I believe in the integrity of the Upcat. And like the other parents, I will just have to be content to await its results, albeit with bated breath. I can only wish my son the very best of luck.

Now my question, which I suppose is also the question of the hundreds of thousands of parents whose kids have taken, or are taking, the Upcat, and demand absolute honesty from it because their lives depend upon it, is:

What the hell is GMA still doing in Malacañang?

Ramos' shock formula

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

WITH A PERSISTENCE characteristic of the man, former President Fidel Ramos has addressed the argument that revising the 1987 Constitution alongside the impeachment proceedings against President Macapagal-Arroyo could put competitive claims on the time and energy of Congress.

Misgivings have been expressed that Congress would be overloaded with two extremely important tasks with rather fundamental implications for political change—the first involving the dismissal from office of a sitting President, and the other, constitutional change seeking a shift from the 70-year-old presidential system to the parliamentary system—let alone legislating normal legislation and being sidetracked by congressional investigations.

Speaking at the 104th anniversary of the defunct Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police, which Ramos headed during Marcos' martial-law regime, Ramos asserted that "impeachment, constitutional change and lawmaking can be done simultaneously."

The speech reflects the "can-do" mentality of Ramos, which is the hallmark of his high-performance presidency, but the agenda he proposed to fast-track constitutional change is a tall order and unrealistic. Members of Congress do not have the work ethic set by Ramos during his presidency.

Ramos urged members of Congress to change their bad habits and hold plenary sessions in the morning rather in the afternoon. At present, committee hearings, in which most of the bills are drafted, are held in the morning, if members are not diverted by congressional investigations.

Thus, Ramos proposed that members refrain from taking too many holiday breaks and junkets abroad. "Work 16 hours a day," Ramos said. "They should stop dinner meetings. They should just be served *pan de sal* and coffee. Food is expensive now. Let us cut out the frills and the extravagance."

One wonders whether legislators can accept a spartan lifestyle. The menu he prescribed is barracks food. Ramos is not only stressing the urgency of constitutional change, he is also advocating a drastic lifestyle change and a work ethic that would send members of Congress into paroxysms of culture shock. Between lifestyle change and constitutional change, the former might be harder to undertake.

To be sure, Ramos lived up to this rigorous work regime during his presidency which found him working longer hours than the fabled workaholics such as the Japanese and Koreans in their drive to transform the countries into advanced industrial economies. Ramos set a legislative agenda that performed and that received Congress' consensus.

The high performance of his administration—in particular, the breaking of the energy shortage during his first year in office—seems to have motivated Ramos to push constitutional change to the fast lane and to think that his agenda can be accomplished within a time-frame of six months, culminating in a switch to the parliamentary system by middle of 2006.

However, Ramos has to overcome the resistance to his call for constitutional change, coming from critics who suspect that the switch to the parliamentary system would pave the way for his return to power as prime minister, the same criticism hurled at Speaker Jose de Venecia, another advocate of speedy revision.

Other than that, the switch, it is alleged, is a mechanism that would divert the not inconsiderable public pressure on President Arroyo to step down because of allegations of cheating in the 2004 election to the process of constitutional revision and buy her precious breathing space, thereby prolonging her stay in office.

Since 1986, Ramos has played a pivotal role in, first, ousting the Marcos dictatorship, and, second, in defending the Aquino government from six coup attempts. At a critical moment of the Arroyo regime on July 8, when it was on the brink of collapse, Ramos intervened by coming to the side of Ms Arroyo and emphatically rejecting calls for her resignation. He also put on top of the national agenda of political change the issue of constitutional revision. Ramos' intervention is believed to have neutralized the intervention of the other Edsa I key player, former President Aquino, who joined the resignation call.

Although Ramos' intervention was crucial to the Arroyo regime's survival, it would be too much to say that Ramos is now the power behind the regime and has taken it captive. That is exaggerating his role. Ramos' agenda seems to be larger and more important than opening space for a soft landing for President Arroyo from the current crisis.

Ramos' interventions have grown out of crises since 1986. These crises have defined his political outlook and have influenced his thinking that the succession of crises has demonstrated that the presidential system has proved to be dysfunctional, and has underlined the urgency of the shift to the parliamentary system.

Ramos has called attention to persistent gridlock in the adversarial system of checks and balances of the presidential system and the system's inflexibility. The stalemates that can't be broken within the system have driven conflicts over nonperforming, venal and scandal-ridden governments for resolution to the streets through people power. The adaptability of the parliamentary system in averting crisis and dismissing political leadership through a non-confidence vote is the strongest argument for systemic change.

Whether or not the shift would allow survival of the Arroyo regime is secondary to the promise of deadlock-breaking within a parliamentary arena, without going to the streets and the shedding of blood. Besides, her political life is likely to be decided soon enough by another process, which is impeachment.

An island fairy tale

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FAIRY tales, they say, are really stories based on real life, offering children real-life lessons, though couched in fantastical terms.

A feminist reading of "Little Red Riding Hood," for instance, would yield the insight that it is really a folk moral about the dangers of rape, the ancients' gentle way of warning young women about the foolhardiness of wandering off into unfamiliar territory (the woods) and talking to strangers (the big bad wolf).

And we know, of course, what moral "The Ugly Duckling" is teaching us: not to judge others by their outside appearance, because inside an ugly duckling might be lurking a beautiful swan.

The same moral, but with a different take, is found in my favorite fairy tale. I don't even know what its title is, but it tells the story of a homely princess whose plain looks could not but pale beside the beauty of her older sisters. Despairing that he would ever marry off his youngest, the King invites young nobles to pay suit to his daughter. But the young woman staunchly refuses to primp herself up and one by one they leave disappointed.

Until one last suitor is scheduled to visit. Stubbornly, the princess insists on working in the kitchen all day instead of submitting herself to the ministrations of beauticians. Called by her exasperated father to meet the suitor, the princess rushes out of the kitchen flustered and sweaty. But this is not what the suitor sees. Instead, he finds that the steam in the kitchen has curled her mousy hair, while the heat has turned her cheeks rosy. And her lips, plump and red from hours of sipping and tasting her cooking, have become her most attractive asset. He falls in love, and she cannot but fall in love, too, with a man who saw through her plainness and appreciated her, as the Mark Darcy character says in "Bridget Jones' Diary": 'Just as you are."

* * *

THE MUSICAL "Once on This Island" is based on a novel "My Love, My Love" by Rosa Guy, which is itself based on the fairy tale "The Little Mermaid."

"The Little Mermaid" is one of the world's most beloved fairy tales even if it deprives readers of the usual happy ending and leaves the heroine, betrayed by the man she loved, stranded onshore and gazing out to sea, waiting in vain for his return. (The Disney movie was a sappy commercial version in contrast.)

The fairy tale may have been about two different species—human beings and merfolk—and how even true love could not overcome the differences between their separate worlds. But the story was written in an era when class restrictions reigned, when one's class decided not just one's economic status and way of life, but, it was believed, also one's aspirations and character. "The Little Mermaid" may have served as a lesson on the perils of seeking to cross class divides, but it could also be read as a heartfelt protest against the price individuals paid under a feudal system.

"Once on This Island" likewise confronts feudalism and the cruel divisions imposed by rigidly stratified societies. But, being set in the French Antilles, still reeling from centuries of colonialism, the musical also takes on the lingering effects of colonialism and racism, while paying homage to the strong sense of the spiritual and mystical among Caribbean populations.

* * *

DIRECTOR Bart Guingona, in his notes, mentions that "Once on This Island" has proven to be quite a popular musical in the country, having been staged here about twice or thrice previously. (The current staging is in fact a return engagement at the RCBC Theater.)

This is how he explains its appeal to Filipino audiences: "The divide between the rich and poor, the ethnic prejudices, the necessity of dance and song and humor as salves to scarred existences—these and the disdain and cynicism of the privileged minority for the teeming unwashed 'heathen' are parallels that sent shivers of recognition down my spine. Set in a fabled Caribbean island, 'Once on This Island' could also have been set in Bacolod or Cebu or any of the nameless, feudal turfs that dot our islands."

But though he may have taken to heart the bitter "real-life" lessons beneath the musical's gloss, Guingona employs a light and lighthearted hand in staging the musical. It's already a winner just by the music alone, with catchy hummable tunes by the team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. But add to these the eye-catching costumes in pastel prints, the energetic choreography (by Denisa Reyes), the charming production design (by Gino Gonzales) and the talents in full display onstage, and you have a real winner!

* * *

"VETERAN" personages, or as veteran as our performers can be in the context of our small theater world, can be found in the cast, including May Bayot as the heroine Ti Moune's mother, Michael de Mesa, Bituin Escalante (who threatens to run away with the show in her number "Mama Will Provide"), Menchu Lauchengco Yulo, rocker Jett Pangan, Michael Williams and Bodjie Pascua. Even with just these excellent performers, Actors' Actors could not but have produced a world-class musical.

Even more astonishing are the younger cast members, starting with Kristian Lei as Ti Moune who honed her skills with the "Miss Saigon" Germany troupe. Jeffrey Hidalgo who plays Ti Moune's love Daniel, may be a familiar name, but "Once on This Island" is his first Broadway musical. I was most taken, though, by Gaia Angeni Sanchez, as the child Ti Moune, who stood with the older cast members song for song, dance for dance and never faltered.

Indeed, what wealth of talent and artistry we can boast of in this country! When musical skill, grace and sensitivity were handed out by the gods, they spilled an inordinate amount on our islands. And that, as they say, is no fairy tale.

Culture as industry

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST Monday at the Department of Foreign Affairs building along Roxas Boulevard, a simple program was held to commemorate the 38th anniversary of the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean). I'm told there were other celebrations held in all the member states: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. In Manila, all the ambassadors of the Asean countries, led by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, were asked to walk up the wall fronting the building and raise their respective flags to the tune of the Asean hymn composed by Ryan Cayabyab. Afterwards everyone proceeded to the lobby to view a photo exhibit on Asean as well as an exhibit of kites from member countries.

Having grown up with our rather simple kites, it was quite a revelation to see the more elaborate kites of the other countries. It struck me at that point that I knew more about Western countries than I did about our neighbors. Perhaps I should have paid more attention to my Asian history teachers in high school and college.

Like all occasions of this nature, everything ended with food and we were treated to various dishes from Asean countries. The fact that Secretary Romulo celebrated his birthday the day before gave the reception an added dimension, but what struck me as I sampled each and every dish on offer were all the dishes based on rice, particularly those wrapped in banana leaves like our own *suman*. Not all were sweet or plain. Some even had shrimp and other *ulam* in them. In deference to Muslim countries, there was not much pork available.

Those who want to know our Asean neighbors are often hampered by language, but food, like the visual arts, music or film, transcends language and is one of the sure ways of promoting understanding among nations.

Last week, the Asean Ministers Responsible for Culture and the Arts (AMCA) met in Bangkok to discuss a number of issues, including cooperation among the member countries on human resource development, and also the development of small- and medium-sized cultural enterprises. Most important was the cooperation in the construction of cultural policies, with focus on the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage.

What caught my eye in the agenda though was the liberalization of trade in the culture sector under Asean because "culture" is often neglected when governments make their priorities. Culture, if at all, is often found at the bottom of the priority list because most people do not realize the economic benefits of culture. When tourists come to visit places like Intramuros or the National Museum, that is often placed under tourism when it is a valid cultural industry. When we export handicrafts that is a cultural industry. When Filipinos train to perform music or dance abroad, that is often placed under manpower skills when it should rightfully be put under cultural industry.

We have films, we have music, and now even the broadcast arts that generate revenue but they are often seen in economic rather than cultural terms. The rage in town now are Korean telenovelas, but few of us know that our own Pinoy telenovelas are viewed and much appreciated in other countries like Malaysia. Aside from the fact that culture is a means toward shaping a nation, we should start to acknowledge the economic impact of culture so that it will get the government support it needs to develop and flourish.

Also in Bangkok was a separate meeting of AMCA+3, meaning the culture ministers of Asean plus the representatives from China, Japan and South Korea. Of the three, only China deemed the meeting important enough to send a full minister, thus a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between Asean represented by Secretary General Ong Keng Yong and China represented by Culture Minister Sun Jiazheng, who reiterated the invitation for a delegation from the Philippines to sign the RP-China Cultural Agreement in Beijing this year.

The Second Asean Festival of Arts was celebrated in Bangkok around the theme "The Art of Puppetry: The Common Heritage" that had participants from the various countries, including Teatrong Mulat from the Philippines'. It was quite fascinating to watch the audience rather than the performers on stage, because from the positive audience reaction it was fairly obvious that puppets could transcend the barriers of language and culture and speak to a foreign audience. Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the gala performance and that was a treat in itself. Most of the ministers watched the preparations made before, during and after the visit of the princess, noting how different things were in countries without a monarchy. When asked about the Philippines, I replied that we also had a monarchy once but they were deposed in 1986.

From the complaints we read about in Bambi Harper's column that alternates with mine in this space, one can only hope that with the policies being laid down by AMCA, our government can see culture as an effective means of diplomacy and as a integral factor in national development.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Statistical lapses

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has made much of the country's economic statistics, littering her speeches with rosy figures to show how under her leadership, we've had economic growth, reduced poverty levels, saved the government from a fiscal crisis.

But last week, an admission from the National Statistics Office (NSO) added to the doubts people had about the accuracy of her statistics. Initially, the NSO said that in 2004, our trade deficit was only $713 million, meaning we imported $713 million more than we exported. That itself is still a lot of money but still seemed reasonable. It turns out now that a technological glitch had led to the NSO under-reporting the trade deficit, with the actual deficit running to $4.36 billion.

It's mind-boggling—really now, how does one misplace $3.6 billion?

Unlike the election returns, no one's accusing Ms Arroyo of massaging the statistics here, but there is enough concern to wonder how widespread the problems are with the handling of statistics. Usually, these glitches are blamed on a lack of technology but in this case, it was actually blamed on new high technology that had been put to use at the Bureau of Customs. In other words, high-tech computers but low-tech human resources.

Maybe we should be more forgiving about these lapses, but I'm disturbed because this latest revelation seems to be only the latest in a series of gaffes involving the country's statistical system. We should be asking: Just how does the current government, one headed by an economist, look at statistics?

No census

In case you haven't noticed, we've been conducting a national census every five years, but the one scheduled for this year has been called off because the government doesn't have the money. These censuses are important; foremost, they give us an idea of the country's demographics: how large the population is, how fast it is growing, how the population is going in terms of age, gender, geographical distribution. Without the 2005 census, we will have to wait until 2010, when the President's term runs out (if she isn't prime minister by then), for a new census. This delay opens us to a lot of speculations when it comes to the crucial area of family planning.

But it isn't just in family planning where we need census figures. Let me give one example: We don't even know what the language situation is today in the Philippines. August is designated as National Language Month so I tried to dig up the latest statistics on how many speakers there were of Filipino, as well as of our other languages. I ended up in the website of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), a research group, but it was using the 1995 census, which was the last time we asked people about languages they spoke.

What's the big deal about getting the number of speakers for languages? On one hand, we need to know if we are moving toward some kind of national unity, at least around a Filipino language. How many Filipinos do consider Filipino now as a first language? On the other hand, we might want to find out how many Filipinos still feel comfortable with English, given the way we continue to aim to export Filipinos to work overseas, while capturing a greater segment of the outsourcing market, such as call centers, where English language proficiency is also important. A national census could help us evaluate our global competitiveness as well.

Glo figures

There are, of course, many other uses for the censuses. The figures help us project what our needs are for education and other social services. Without the statistics, we will continue to react to each crisis only as they occur.

Besides the census, there are many other surveys our government conducts, but the figures that are churned out are often used for political purposes, what I call "Glo" (as in "glow") figures. In the last few months, we've been bombarded with such figures claiming a drop in unemployment, and in poverty incidence.

The problem is that the glow comes from new definitions for poverty and unemployment. I quote from the NSO website on the new definition of unemployment, which was just adopted with the last labor survey in April: "the unemployed include all persons who are 15 years old and over as of their last birthday and are reported as (1) without work; AND (2) currently available for work; AND (3) seeking work OR not seeking work due to valid reasons." Notice all three conditions need to be fulfilled to classify someone as unemployed. The NSO itself admits in its website that unemployment comes to 8.3 percent using the new definition, but would be 12.9 percent using the old one.

Labor activists claim there's hanky-panky going on here, but the new definition actually comes from the International Labor Organization and allows our figures to be compared with other countries. The trouble begins when officials begin mixing the new statistics with old ones—we call this "comparing apples and oranges" (or, to be nationalistic, guavas and mangoes).

Instead of playing with these figures, Ms Arroyo and her advisers should be breaking down and analyzing the figures. For example, the NSO has an intriguing new category of "discouraged workers": those who are jobless but are not seeking work because they believe there are no jobs available. In April 2005, there were more than 600,000 of these discouraged workers.

The NSO's "discouraged workers" made me think: What about the millions of Filipinos who are employed, but who feel discouraged, too, and hopeless, waiting for a chance to work overseas or to migrate? What about the thousands of doctors in nursing schools? Those numbers tell us a lot about where the country is today.

What counts

A sign posted outside Albert Einstein's office door is now often quoted: "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

I wonder if the current administration does understand what counts. Out in the streets, poverty incidence figures and unemployment rates mean little. Someone doing a few hours a week of casual work considers himself "*walang trabaho*" (jobless) but officially, he'd be considered "underemployed," not "unemployed." This hapless fellow wouldn't care less. To be jobless is to be poor and to be poor—*mahirap*—is to be in hardship, regardless of what the latest government definitions of unemployment and poverty may be.

* * *

Announcement: Renowned psychologist Dr. Maria Lourdes (Honey) Carandang is delivering a lecture on Truthtelling and National Healing tomorrow, Aug. 11, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Claro M. Recto Conference Hall, Faculty Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman. Someone named Michael Tan will be the discussant. The talk is open to the public, and is organized by the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society UP Chapter, the Phi Kappa Phi Philippines Foundation, and the Office of the Dean, UP College of Arts and Letters.

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SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

DAY 1 (10 August 2005, Wednesday)
10:00 am-11:30 am RIBBON CUTTING AND OPENING CEREMONIES
1:30 pm-3:30 pm BASIC FIRST AID/ BASIC LIFE SUPPORT
Ms. Ma. Cynthia L. Gabriel
Philippine National Red Cross
4:00 pm-5:00 pm COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS
Dr. Maria Yvette Amante/ Dr. Eric Jason Amante
Asian Hospital
5:30 pm-6:30 pm TAKING THE RIGHT MEDICINES

DAY 2 (11 August 2005, Thursday)
11:00 am-12:00 nn HAIR AND SKIN CARE TIPS
Dr. Jo de Mayuga
Asian Hospital
1:30 pm-3:00 pm CARE TIPS FOR THE EYES, EARS, NOSE AND THROAT
Dr. Marcelle Roque
Asian Hospital
3:00 pm-4:00 pm COMMON EYE DISEASES
Dr. Cynthia V. Garcia
GG Eye Center and Optical
4:30 pm-5:30 pm NO SMOKING CAMPAIGN
Dr. Jessica de Leon
Department of Health

DAY 3 (12 August 2005, Friday)
11:00 am-12:00 nn OSTEOPOROSIS: A PREVENTABLE DISEASE
Dr. Arthur Capili
Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines
1:30 pm-2:30 pm ORAL CARE TIPS
Dr. Arlene Mahan
Philippine Dental Association
3:00 pm-4:30 pm SEVERE HEALTH PROBLEMS AND ORGAN DISORDERS
Dr. Joel de Rosa/ Dr. Vincent Macalinao/ Dr. Delia V. Bayag
Asian Hospital
5:00 pm-6:00 pm HYPERTENSION MANAGEMENT
Dr. Joel M. Abanilla
Philippine Society of Hypertension
5:00 pm-6:30 pm PARENTING TODAY: ISSUES & CONCERNS REGARDING SAFETY OF CHILDREN
Dr. Fennarie Valdes
The Medical City
6:30 pm-7:00pm RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOR OF TEENAGERS
Dr. Mary Agnes Teetoo
The Medical City

DAY 4 (13 August 2005, Saturday)
11:00 am-12:00 nn SPECIAL CONCERNS FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN
Dr. Pamela G. Gaeda
Asian Hospital
1:30 pm-3:00 pm FAMILY PLANNING
Ms. Lilbeth Vargas
Family Planning Organization of the Philippines
4:00 pm-5:00 pm UNDERSTANDING A WOMAN'S BODY
Dr. Ma. Lora G. Tansengco
Asian Hospital

DAY 5 (14 August 2005, Sunday)
11:00 am-12:00 nn FITNESS TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR BUSY PEOPLE
Planet Infinity
1:00 pm-2:30 pm STRESS MANAGEMENT
Dr. Jessica de Leon
Department of Health
3:00 pm-4:00 pm HEALTHY LIVING
Dr. [illegible] Barona
Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines
4:30 pm-5:30 pm ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE
Mr. Jaime E. Sy-Liaco
PITAHC
6:00 pm-6:30 pm TIME IS BRAIN "STROKE: WHAT NON-MD SHOULD KNOW"
Dr. Jose Pascual Reyes
The Medical City
6:30 pm-7:00 pm EXERCISE IN WOMEN
Dr. Ma. Victoria Tangco
The Medical City

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Tainted Comelec officials

NEAL Cruz, in his July 25 column, made reference to an opinion of "a Comelec old-timer" who supposedly said that the call for the resignation of all the Comelec commissioners is an "unfair one," since only "Garci" figured in the tapes, not the "other commissioners."

For the record, the "other commissioners" are heavily tainted, not because of the tapes, but on account of their direct participation in the highly illegal and immoral procurement of the automated counting machines for the May 2004 elections.

As early as September 2004, Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan initiated a criminal complaint with the Ombudsman against these commissioners for violation of the Anti-Plunder Law, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees and the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Eight months earlier, that is, on Jan. 13, 2004, the Supreme Court, in GR No. 159139, already ordered the Ombudsman "to determine the criminal liability, if any, of the public officials (and conspiring private individuals, if any), involved..."

Clearly, therefore, all that should be done now is for the Ombudsman to wake up from a long slumber and fully effect the decision of the high court. It is unfortunate that an off-tangent, irrelevant comment of an anonymous "Comelec old-timer" should appear in the widely read column of Cruz.

—EMILIO C. CAPULONG JR.,
executive director,
Bantay Katarungan

There was no illegal logging in UPLB

WE would like to clarify the article "Illegal logging case vs UPLB head endorsed." (PDI, 8/1/05)

The headline referred to "illegal logging," but the article itself mentioned the cutting of only "two hardwood trees." Two trees hardly constitute commercial-scale cutting, as "logging" would imply. We think it is irresponsible journalism to sensationalize the simple act of cutting two termite-infested trees for public safety reasons. It is utterly disappointing and grossly unfair that a leading newspaper should allow this blunder, thus casting the UPLB, a well-known vanguard of environmental and forest conservation here and abroad, in a bad light.

As for the endorsement of the filing of criminal and administrative charges against me, we have yet to receive formal communications from the Office of the Environment Ombudsman. I will submit myself to an investigation—not to the bar of public opinion, where disgruntled people usually take issues that cannot stand examination in the legal arena—as this is the only means I can clear my name.

It is lamentable that, despite repeated explanations by UPLB officials regarding the facts surrounding the tree-cutting case since it broke out last year, Marlon Ramos has refused to understand them. This is evident in the slant of his stories on this controversy (in the following issues of the Inquirer: July 29 and Sept. 27, 2004, and June 16, 2005) which have consistently portrayed me as having pecuniary motives for approving the cutting of the trees. He may have been fed limited information by his sources, but one does not have to be a journalist to know that it is elementary for news reporters to investigate both sides of the issue and not take the easy way out by resorting to such self-exculpating statements as "Mr. ____ could not be reached for comment."

Am I to be blamed for being inaccessible to some news reporters—an attitude I probably developed after unfortunate experiences with their erroneous reportage and adversarial slant? But if reporters are indeed dedicated to their craft, they could get more information from other credible sources for a more balanced reporting.

Thank you for giving me a chance to air my side on this matter.

—WILFREDO P. DAVID,
chancellor,
University of the Philippines
Los Baños

WE'RE sorry a desk editor made an error in writing the headline. It should have read: "Illegal cutting case vs UPLB head endorsed."—Ed.

A challenge to presidential wannabes

THE TWO-PARTY presidential system of our 1935 Constitution retained in our 1986 Constitution is doomed in the multi-party parliamentary structure of our 1986 Constitution. The numerous and restless cause-oriented blocs, some pseudo-political parties and many presidential wannabes are all clamoring for power-sharing in government sans responsibility. Our elections have degenerated into popularity contests. We must, for urgent survival reasons, search for a parliamentary model that will address and heal our political, social and economic problems and thus unite us to face the realities and challenges of a fiercely competitive global economy.

With over 114 parliamentary governments worldwide, we have to search for a model that will answer our needs. This task belongs to our Congress—both the House and the Senate—as mandated by our Constitution. Barring the personal presidential ambitions of many politicians, of the three modes of amending the Constitution, the No. 1 choice recommended by the Constitution itself is through the Constituent Assembly (Art. XVIII, Section 1, Paragraph 1). Any amendment made by such a body shall also be ratified by the people in a national election called for the purpose.

Of the major parliaments worldwide, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France and Singapore, Sweden's unicameral parliament, which is elected for a four-year term through proportional representation, deserves close study because of its stability. Besides, the system allows for a broad participation of political parties; since 1921, five of the seven major political parties had been represented in Sweden's Parliament. During the term 1998-2002, seven political parties shared the 349 parliamentary seats. This power-sharing concept by political parties will give venue and voice to our cause-oriented groups, such that even the Communist Party of the Philippines, cause-oriented blocs and our Muslim brothers can participate in government (provided they formally organize themselves into political parties) where even a minority assemblyman from Sulu or Masbate, by virtue of the coalition process, can be chosen as prime minister, a process unheard of in our present system.

A parliamentary government like Sweden's will unite and strengthen us to face the fierce challenges of a global economy, that is, only if our presidential wannabes will selflessly think of our country first before their personal ambitions. Are our leaders and people ready for this challenge?

—FRUCTUOSO SUZARA,
executive director,
Social Policy Advocacy,
15 Charleyville St., White Plains, QC

Exercise restraint even if system is weak

THIS is a reaction to the column of former Justice Isagani Cruz, which was titled "The sovereign will of the people." (PDI, 7/17/05) While I respect his opinion on the matter of the President's resignation because she "has forfeited her right to her present position," may I say that it is unfair, unjust and premature, especially because it comes from a former justice of the Supreme Court, a man of law and a respectable columnist. Just the title of the column already shows his bias and is very deceiving. It does not reflect the true sovereign will of the people even if this question will be submitted in a nationwide survey—repeat, nationwide—not only Metro Manila.

I wish to inform Justice Cruz that we, victims of heinous crimes, were taught by our government (the executive, legislative and judicial branches) to follow due process of law and never to take the law into our hands. We are doing these and have, in fact, committed ourselves to follow the law under any circumstances.

Engulfing our nation today is the controversy over the tape-recorded conversations allegedly between the President and a Comelec official. The controversy has affected the credibility of the President, hence the call from some sectors for her immediate resignation, or for the establishment of a transition government, or for the installation of a junta, or even for a revolution, etc.

Isn't it, Justice Cruz, that for a man of law, due process and the rule of law must never be compromised? Ms Arroyo has said time and again that she will not resign and will opt for impeachment. You wrote that the impeachment process at the moment is a toothless tiger because it will be difficult to enlist the numbers in both legislative chambers. This is absurd and condemnable. Are you suggesting to us that since our justice system is corruptible and some people implementing the system (past and present) are corrupt, we, the victims, must now stop following it and resort to unconstitutional ways? Let me remind Justice Cruz that we, the victims of heinous crimes, are in the most difficult position when it comes to awaiting the decision of a judge in our criminal cases. Still, whatever the decision of the judge, we respect it and accept it with humility, despite the pain and anger inside our hearts.

I appeal to all sectors to exercise restraint and, as dictated to us by our Constitution, never to take the law into our hands. Let us respect the will of the majority of our people. *Vox populi, vox dei.*

—DANTE JIMENEZ,
founding chair,
Volunteers Against Crime
and Corruption (VACC), 6/F Mondragon Bldg.,
Dele Costa St., Makati City

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INQBOX
Question of the Week

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DENR allows log transport in Quezon

OBSTRUCTION
Workers try to remove a Philippine Rabbit bus that blocked traffic on the North Expressway after it fell on its side on the expressway made slippery by rains.
TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON

LUCENA CITY—Logs, charcoal and other finished forest wood products can now be transported out of Aurora and Quezon provinces, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said in a memorandum dated Aug. 2.

However, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources chief made it clear that the documents to be issued by the DENR regional office in connection with the retrieval and movement of logs and wood products "shall not in any way be construed as lifting of the logging ban" in the two provinces.

"The logging ban in these provinces shall continue to be in force and effect," Defensor said.

He said the implementation of his order, including the authorized disposition and transport of wood products, will only be effective for 60 days from the date of the memorandum.

The memorandum was titled "Disaster Preparedness in the Forthcoming Typhoon Season in the Provinces of Aurora and Quezon."

Defensor explained that in making the memorandum, they took into consideration various appeals, particularly from Sen. Richard Gordon, who earlier asked the DENR to assess the dangers in the areas posed by the approaching typhoon season to avoid the repeat of last year's disaster.

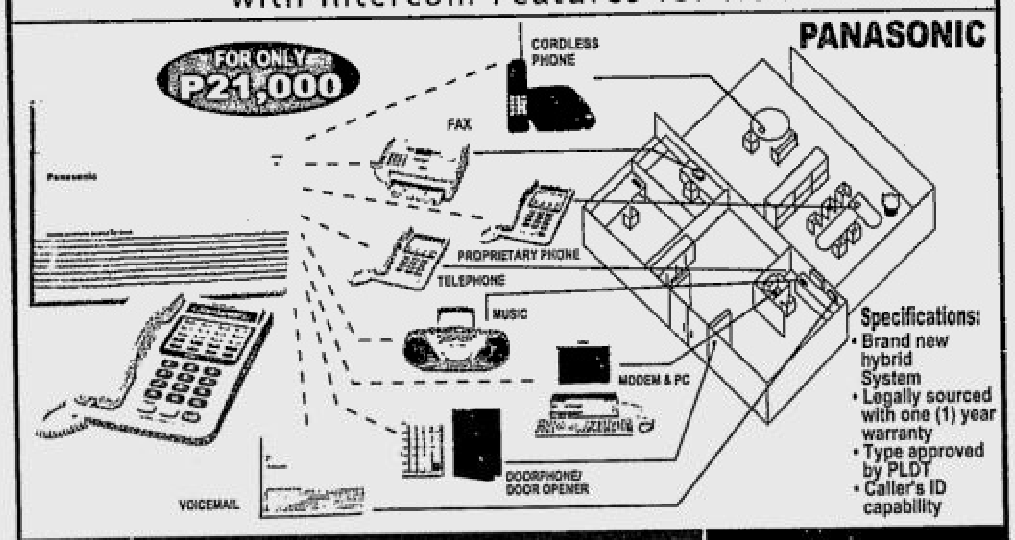
In November last year, after four successive typhoons, close to 1,000 people died in killer floods and landslides and destroyed millions of pesos worth of property in Quezon and Aurora.

Great volumes of drifted logs still litter riverbanks, plains and coastal areas, awaiting retrieval. But with the log ban, local officials and even homeless residents, are afraid to gather and use the logs, fearful of government prosecution in the absence of an order from the DENR.

To survive, calamity victims made charcoal from tops and branches of drifted logs.

However, due to the DENR's imposed transport restrictions on all forest products, the charcoal stocks were left with no buyers.

Based on the inventory of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Real, Quezon last June, an estimated 147,324 sacks of wood charcoal had been stored in the three towns. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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Trade network seeks release of bishop's brod

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A network of fair trade firms in Asia has called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to order the release of Romeo Capalla who was arrested last week for allegedly being part of a group of New People's Army (NPA) rebels who burned pieces of construction equipment in Guimbal town, Iloilo last year.

In a petition letter dated Aug. 7, the Asia Fair Trade Forum Inc. (AFTF) said they are "gravely concerned" with the Aug. 3 arrest of Capalla, younger brother of Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla and manager of the Panay Fair Trade Center (PFTC).

The AFTF is composed of fair trade organizations in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, China and the Philippines.

These organizations help provide livelihood to farmers and people's organizations by buying products higher than the prevailing price for export to Europe and other markets.

"None of the witnesses for the complainant in the case filed against (Capalla) has identified him by name or by description in their affidavits. Thus, we condemn his arrest and demand for his immediate release from detention," said the statement signed by AFTF convenor Claribel David.

David pointed out that Capalla has worked for the PFTC for 11 years and has managed the organizations for the last four years.

Bulacan state university shuts campus paper, sacks writers

CITY OF MALOLOS—Officials of the Bulacan State University last week ordered the closure of the offices of the school's 32-year-old publication, Pacesetter, after it released a lampoon issue that hit school officials.

Sheena dela Cruz, managing editor of the Pacesetter, said "martial rule" has taken over the university as school officials wanted to curtail press freedom through the paper's closure on Friday.

The Pacesetter's staff members called the order "unfair" and a "threat" to campus press freedom.

School side

But Dr. Rosario Pimentel, BSU president, said the order was not meant to kill freedom of the press in the campus but was the school's way to stop the paper from putting the institution and its officials in a bad light.

Pimentel accused the Pacesetter's staff members of using the paper as "a vehicle in attacking maliciously the good image of the university and its responsible officers."

In a memorandum last week, he ordered the editorial staff to "stop acting and operating as alleged officers and members" of the Pacesetter.

Dr. Danilo Hilario, presidential assistant on external and international affairs of the BSU and the first editor in chief of the Pacesetter in 1973, said the editorial board was organized without its members undergoing an editorial examination required by the university.

Pimentel asked the staff members to stop using the paper's offices and ordered them to surrender to the university all furniture, equipment, supplies and materials under their custody.

CEGP reaction

The College Editors Guild of the Philippines, the umbrella organization of campus papers in the country, on Monday condemned BSU officials for dismissing the editorial staff of the Pacesetter and for ordering its temporary closure.

Jose Cosido, CEGP national president, said the closure came after the paper exposed alleged anomalies in the state-owned university and urged students to help in correcting these.

The Pacesetter's April issue carried a lampoon, titled "Bad Boys II," on Pimentel and Rolando Gaspar, BSU acting vice president for student affairs and services.

At the back cover, the issue ran a satire of Pimentel, Gaspar and another school official who were featured as the "Impeachables."

Carmela Reyes with reports from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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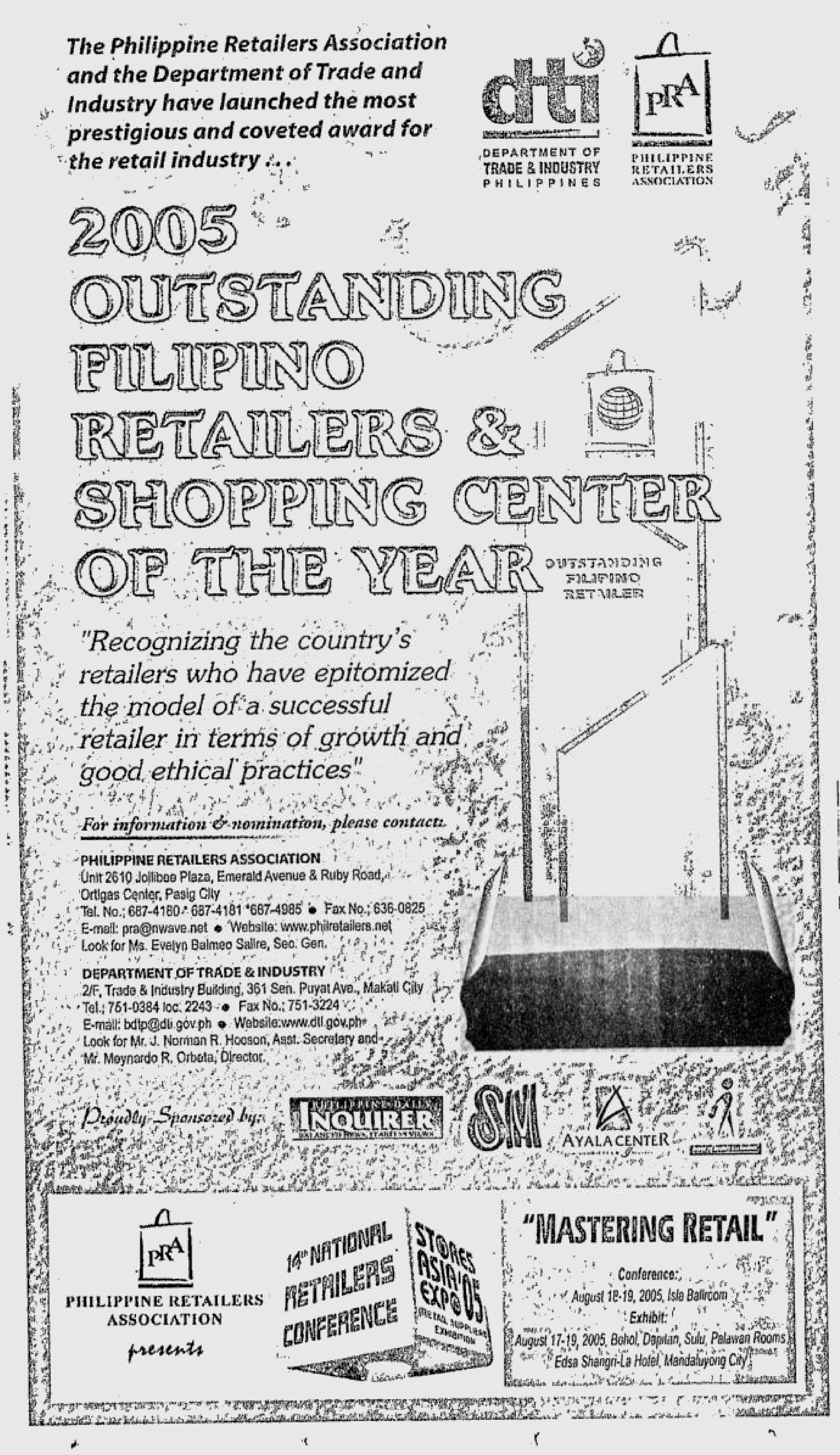
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N. Vizcaya operators say 'jueteng' back in towns

SOLANO, Nueva Vizcaya—"Jueteng" has made a comeback in several towns in this province, as operators are now taking advantage of the "better climate," a police source said on Tuesday.

Quoting a local illegal gambling operator, the source said operations resumed after the "Jueteng-gate" controversy, which has linked President Macapagal-Arroyo and her family members to alleged payoffs, has cooled down.

"Local operators in various parts of Cagayan Valley have been given a go signal to resume," said the police official in Filipino.

The source, however, declined to say who gave the cue.

Jueteng operations here followed an on-and-off pattern in the past months, but stopped when the Senate started its investigation two months ago.

The INQUIRER source said jueteng operations here resumed on Aug. 7.

He said reports indicated that jueteng operations also resumed in several towns in Isabela, Cagayan and Quirino and Santiago City last month.

"Vizcaya *na lang yata ang nahuhuli* (It seems it is only Nueva Vizcaya that is lagging behind)," the source said.

On Monday night, the winning combination for the day's third draw in this town was 32-23. Collectors were also seen collecting bets in downtown Bayombong on Tuesday morning.

When sought for comment, Senior Supt. Robert Mangaccat, Nueva Vizcaya police director, referred the INQUIRER to Supt. James Afalla, deputy provincial director.

Afalla, however, said the reported bet collection may have been those of the government-run lottery.

"Lotto *'yan pare* (That's lotto, my friend)," Afalla said in a text message sent to the INQUIRER.

Solano Mayor Santiago Dickson said he has not heard of any report on the supposed resurgence of illegal gambling in his town.

In Cagayan, Board Member Norman Agatep denounced in a privilege speech the resumption of jueteng operations in the province.

Agatep, on Friday, asked the board to do something to stop jueteng "as it victimizes the poor, especially during this time of crisis."

He said "if the police chief so likes, he can immediately stop the illegal gambling in his town."

"We can rehabilitate a drug addict, but we cannot do it with gamblers who are attracted to the hope that they win," he said.

"I propose that we immediately come up with an ordinance to protect our people from jueteng operators who enjoy earning at the mercy of the poor," Agatep said. *Melvin Gascon with reports from Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Negros Oriental draws big plans for tourism

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Oriental Negros provincial government has decided to take the lead in investing in the province's tourism sector by deciding to construct a P40-P50-million hotel and restaurant complex.

The project will complement the estimated P130-million convention center that the provincial government has started to build last May.

Gov. George P. Arnaiz said the two projects, totaling at least P180 million, will be financed by a P100-million loan from the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), and the remaining amount will be shouldered by the local government of Oriental Negros.

Arnaiz said the original plan of the provincial government did not include the hotel but they realized later the need for such a facility especially with the fast-growing number of tourists visiting the province.

"Even today, which is supposed to be a lean month, our hotels here are fully booked," Arnaiz said.

The governor added once the convention center is in operation, the need for hotel accommodation will become a concern and "we thought that the province will provide those that the private sector cannot in order to take advantage of the opportunity."

The governor also believed that at this time of economic crisis, the government should spend in order to perk up economic activities.

The project, he added, is also meant to encourage the private sector to invest in the local tourism industry.

Arnaiz said with a modern convention center, Dumaguete and the province would all the more become attractive to visitors.

Absence of DILG records puts existence of town in doubt

BAGUIO CITY—The Department of Interior and Local Government has no record of a town called Elpidio Quirino in Kalinga. But this town's "appointive mayor," Lito Taway, insists it did exist.

In fact, the 86-year-old Taway is asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconstitute Elpidio Quirino, which the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos had supposedly created using a 1964 law that formed the Cordillera provinces during the term of former President Diosdado Macapagal, according to a report released by the Philippine Information Agency.

Although formed by law, the town ceased to exist because of a legal issue involving its operations 40 years ago, Taway said in his May 3 petition to Malacañang.

He said the town had formed its own council and he was supposedly appointed as its first mayor, but DILG officials could not validate this claim.

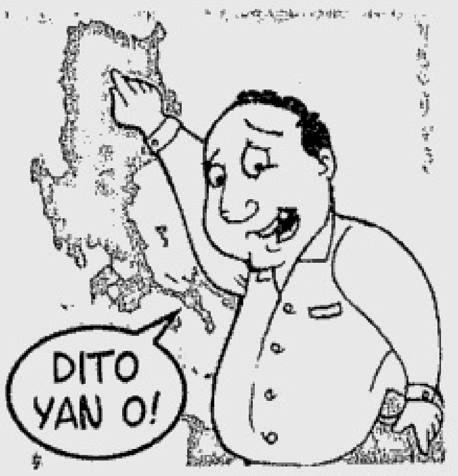


ILLUSTRATION BY LA MISTADES

Survival

The officials have started investigating Taway's claims, to see if the community there had been neglected because Elpidio Quirino could not survive without government appropriations.

Kalinga is more than 12 hours away from Baguio City.

Taway submitted the Elpidio Quirino petition to the Presidential Management Staff when Ms Arroyo attended the Pinukpuk town fiesta three months ago, said Peter Balocnit, PIA Kalinga information center manager.

"The people in the area covered [by Elpidio Quirino] are earnestly praying for [Ms Arroyo] to issue a presidential executive order [reorganizing]… our defunct municipal district… to hasten the development of the affected barangays and so that we may enjoy independence and resume the responsibilities of a separate political unit in this part of the country," the Elpidio Quirino petition says.

Off guard

The town was supposedly formed out of villages belonging to the towns of Balbalan and Pinukpuk, said Everdina Doctor, DILG Cordillera director.

Doctor said Taway's petition caught the agency off guard.

"I have never heard of [Elpidio Quirino town] from the time [the Cordillera Administrative Region was formed in 1987], and we don't have any records about its creation," she said.

Taway said Elpidio Quirino was formed into a district by virtue of Republic Act 4695, the law that trimmed the former Mt. Province cluster to form a smaller Mt. Province, and the provinces of Kalinga, Apayao, Benguet and Ifugao.

These provinces, together with Baguio City and Abra, now constitute the Cordillera region.

Nullified E.O.

Marcos included Elpidio Quirino in a list of 25 towns he "recreated" during his incumbency, but a Supreme Court ruling nullified the executive order that provide the implementing rules and regulations for running Elpidio Quirino, Taway said.

But Balocnit said the town exists for its residents. A public market was formed there in the 1970s, using funds appropriated to Elpidio Quirino town. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Alarm raised on shortage of docs

MAASIN CITY—Dr. Leonardo Eway, chief of the Integrated Provincial Hospital Office (Ipho), has again raised alarm on the shortage of physicians in government-run hospitals after the province failed to recruit new doctors.

"The situation has become so serious, the province could no longer address the health needs of its residents," Eway told the INQUIRER.

The shortage can be felt in the province's four district hospitals in the towns of Hinunangan, Anahawan, Sogod and in Pintuyan on Panaon Island.

Eway said the Sogod District Hospital has three doctors but two are leaving in November to work abroad.

Each of the three other district hospitals has only one doctor who is serving three to four municipalities, he added.

"The province needs at least 11 doctors to serve in these district hospitals," Eway said.

The provincial hospital in Maasin has 17 doctors but 13 are enrolled in nursing, hoping that they could work abroad where the pay is better.

The salary of the government doctors here ranges from P14,000 to P18,000 a month.

Helpless over the planned exodus of government physicians for better jobs abroad, the provincial government here has offered scholarship grants for medical students.

The grant covers tuition, allowance and books but scholars will have to sign a contract to work in the government-run hospital for 16 years after passing the board exams.

"This scheme is taken from the Taiwan experience. The only difference is that in Taiwan, the scholars would have to work until their retirement," said Eway.

The provincial government has earmarked P1 million for four scholars beginning next school year. *Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau*

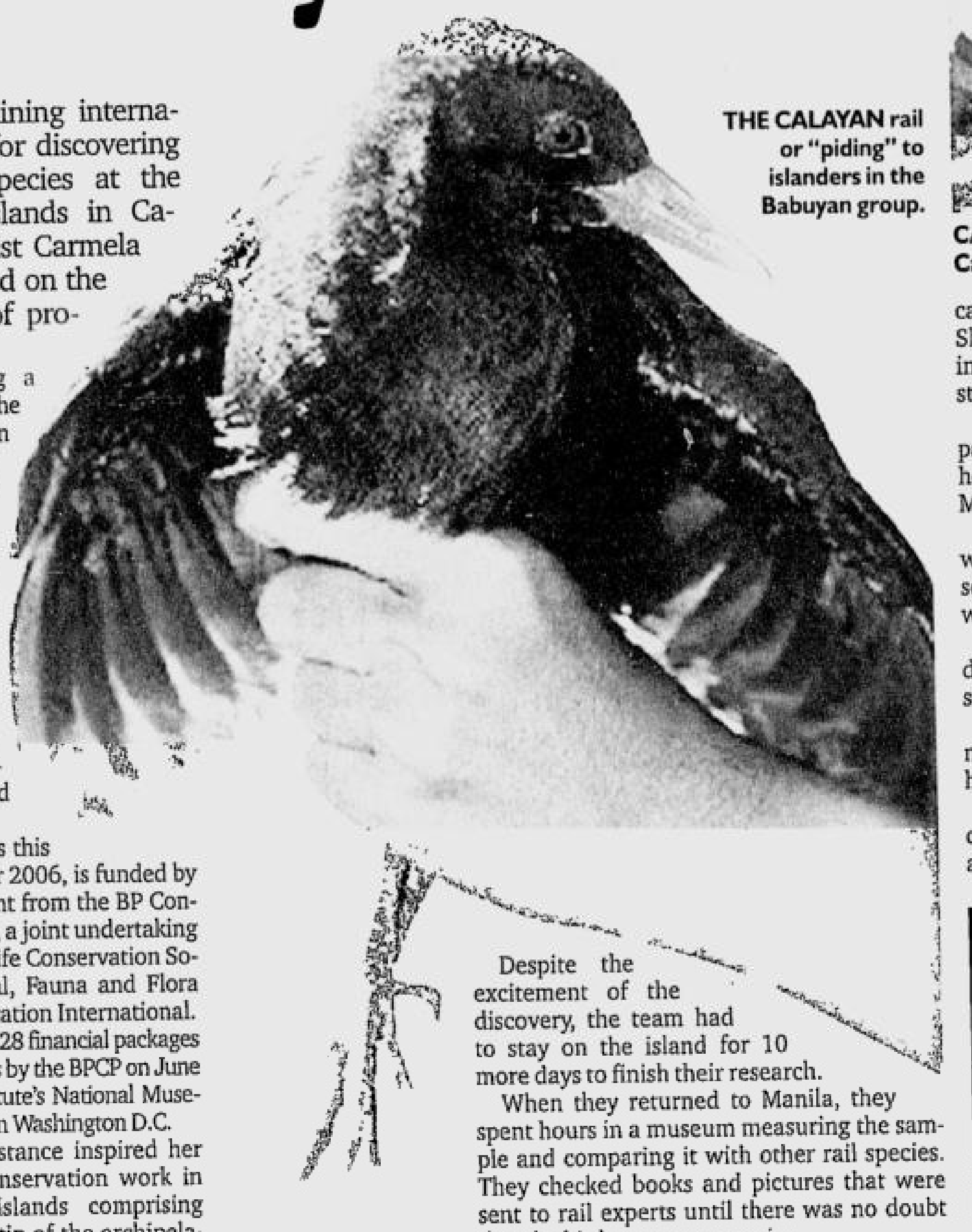
E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Mission: Protect the Calayan rail

By Nestor Burgos Jr.



THE CALAYAN rail or "piding" to islanders in the Babuyan group.

A YEAR after gaining international acclaim for discovering a new bird species at the Babuyan group of islands in Cagayan, wildlife biologist Carmela Española has embarked on the more daunting task of protecting the creatures.

Española, 29, is leading a group that will assess the threats faced by the Calayan rail (*Gallirallus calayanensis*) and conduct an education campaign in schools and forest communities, and workshops with local governments, nongovernment organizations and other institutions to help draw up a conservation plan.

A report of the research results and recommendations will be disseminated to stakeholders and the scientific community.

The project, which starts this month and ends in October 2006, is funded by a $12,500 (P698,875) grant from the BP Conservation Program (BPCP), a joint undertaking of British Petroleum, Wildlife Conservation Society, Birdlife International, Fauna and Flora International, and Conservation International.

The grant was among the 28 financial packages given to conservation groups by the BPCP on June 23 at the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C.

Española said the assistance inspired her group to continue its conservation work in Calayan, one of the islands comprising Babuyan at the northern tip of the archipelago, and especially on the Calayan rail.

Because of its small known population, the Calayan rail may be classified as "vulnerable" under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) "red list" criteria of species of concern.

Discovery

Española and her team of Filipino and British researchers became the toast of the international scientific community last year for discovering the new rail species.

The researchers named their find Calayan rail, after the small island where it was discovered. Locals call the bird "*piding*."

The bird has bright red beak and legs, and is almost flightless. It is only found in Calayan.

A biology graduate from the University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV) in Iloilo, Española was part of a nine-member team led by British biologist Genevieve Broad and conservationist Carl Oliveros that undertook the nine-week research on the island.

The team included British bird consultant Desmond Allen, Harvey Garcia, Marisol Pedregosa, Mark Reyes, Juan Carlos Gonzales and Amado Bajarias.

The expedition was considered the first exploration on the island after the research done by ornithologist R.C. McGregor 100 years ago. "We were expecting a new distribution record because it hasn't been explored for a long time. But we got dozens and on top of all that, a new species," said Española.

As a "birder," she was part of the team assigned to count birds, the number of species and their abundance on the island. The other teams researched on mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

> 'There is a part in all of us that is fascinated with flight, in the ability to soar to great heights'

Lost watch

"It was because I lost my watch," said Española, recounting how she discovered the Calayan rail on May 11 last year.

On the night of May 10 last year, she lost her wristwatch while transferring their equipment in the camp to protect them from the rain. The next day, she set out for their daily routine. But because she was unaware of the time, she extended her walk in the forest.

When she heard an unfamiliar call, she immediately prepared her camera, binoculars and recorder. She was surprised to see four birds emerge from the bushes three meters away. She started taking pictures, careful not to be noticed.

After the birds passed by, she took notes of their distinct features. At the back of her mind was the thought that the winged creatures belonged to a new species, but dismissed it because "it was so unbelievable."

She tried to calm herself by thinking that what she saw could have been migratory birds or immature Philippine birds.

Shouts of joy

When she returned to camp, she immediately shared her experience with the other members. Allen, she said, started asking questions on the bird's features.

After Allen had listened to the recording, he said the species was "totally new," eliciting shouts of joy from the team.

"I felt like exploding," said Española.

Despite the excitement of the discovery, the team had to stay on the island for 10 more days to finish their research.

When they returned to Manila, they spent hours in a museum measuring the sample and comparing it with other rail species. They checked books and pictures that were sent to rail experts until there was no doubt that the bird was a new species.

Española said she felt blessed with the discovery. "God has been very kind to me to let me experience this. I feel so puny all along." She said it also made her more confident of her skills in doing her work.

But most of all, she said, the discovery was a victory for volunteers like the members of her team.

She has been a volunteer since she graduated from college in 1998 and volunteered at the Philippine Endemic Species Conservation Project (PESCP) in Antique. She also spent a year as a volunteer teacher in the UP's Gurong Pahinungod in Jolo.

Animal lover

The experience affirmed her commitment to conservation efforts, she said.

Española said she could not see herself doing any other work because she has been in love with animals, especially birds, since she was a girl.

The second of five siblings, she grew up with stories about native animals told by her father Pablo, whom she calls "a child of the forest." She was amazed with the stories and would always visit their farm in Barotac Viejo town in Iloilo.

At first, Española said she wanted to be a doctor but changed her mind because she became hysterical when her pet animals died. She grew up with pet dogs, cats and chickens in their house. She was also the one who stopped her playmates from hurting animals.

CARMELA Española (second, from right), discoverer of the "vulnerable" bird species in Calayan, rejoices with the members at their base camp. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

One of her happiest times was when her parents, both faculty members of the UPV, and her siblings stayed inside the hilly campus in Miag-ao town in Iloilo.

"I had a forest for myself," she said. She would often go there with her siblings and observe grass owls and monitor lizards, and would identify birds through their calls.

Española said she was fascinated by birds due to their color and melodious calls that sounded "like a song."

"There is also a part in all of us that is fascinated with flight, in the ability to soar to great heights," she said.

But following her heart has also been difficult for Española. Volunteers depend only on allowances they receive, which cover mostly transportation expenses.

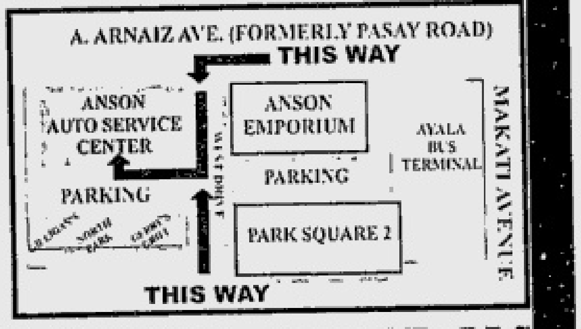
"There were times I wanted to quit, but this is my passion and I can't imagine myself working in an office," Española said.

She is thankful that her family has been supportive. "You've been to places we've only dreamt of but we could see them through you," her father would always tell her.

Española is pursuing a master's degree in wildlife studies at the UP at Los Baños (Laguna).

She stressed the importance of the Babuyan islands as a place where migratory birds rest and feed during their southward journey. There should be a collaborative effort among NGOs, local governments, the academe and the community to protect these islands, she said.

"We must show to the people that conservation efforts are essential and it can work," she said.



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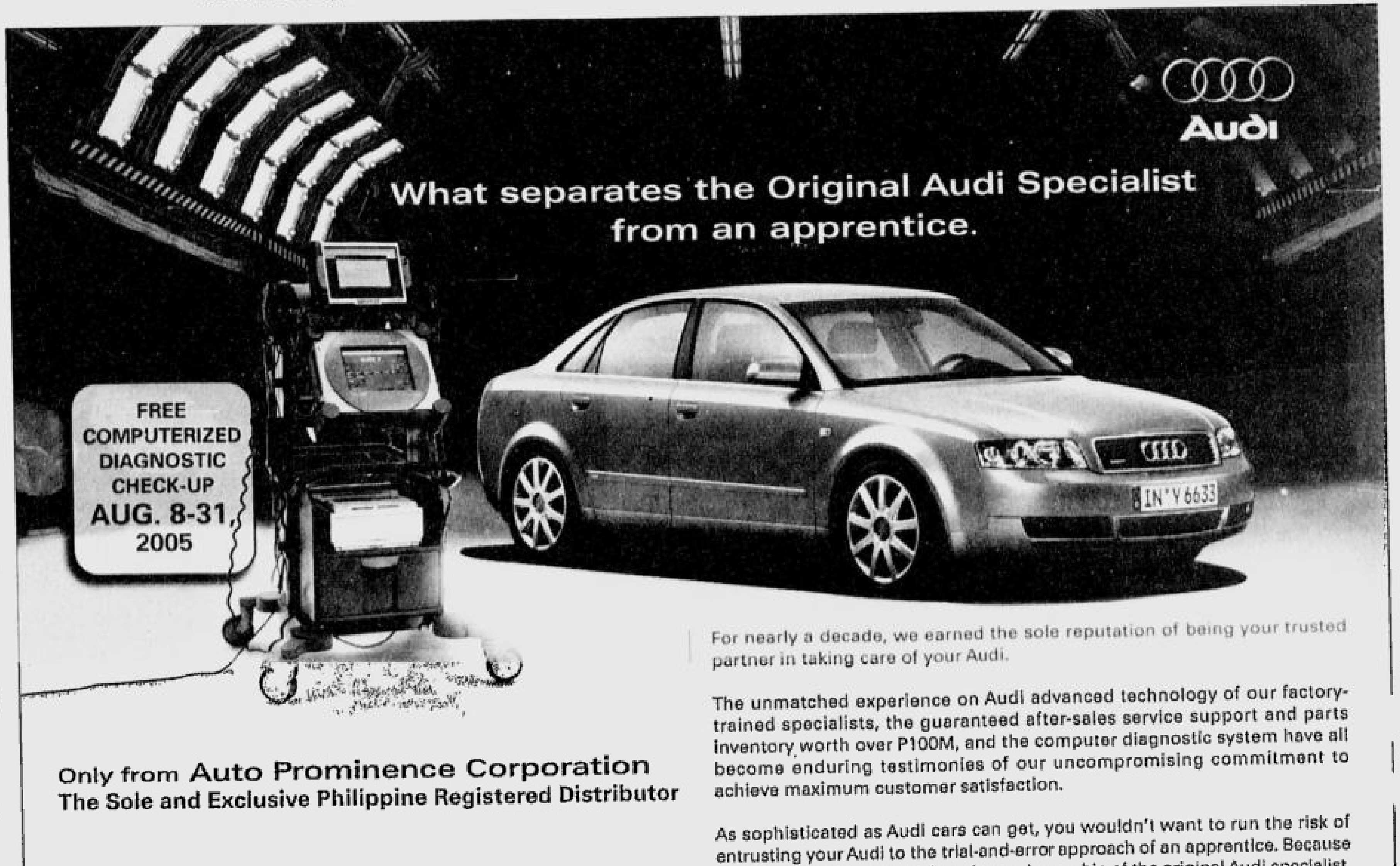
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QC school suspends classes

By DJ Yap

IN HOPES of stamping out dengue which has claimed the lives of three pupils, Bagong Pag-asa Elementary School has suspended classes for the week to give way to cleanup operations and larval tests on campus.

School principal Lourdes Abalos said worried parents had requested the one-week suspension out of fear that their children might contract the mosquito-borne illness in school.

Three of the eight children who had died from dengue in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa since June were pupils of BPES, including 9-year-old Litiyn Rivero, who succumbed to the disease on Aug. 1.

Since June, the barangay has recorded almost 80 dengue victims, most of whom were in Sitio San Roque, a squatter community, barangay administrator Ricky Bajarias said.

City health officials, however, placed the number of confirmed dengue cases in the barangay at just more than 40, from January to July.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said Friday that neglect of surroundings by San Roque residents contributed to the rise in dengue cases in the area.

Belmonte noted that some houses in San Roque were empty, which later became breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

A series of fires also aggravated the situation, as they left holes and other spaces that were often filled by rain, and hosted mosquitoes, the mayor said.

He said it was up to the residents to keep the area clean and safe from the mosquito-borne disease, he said.

Abalos said almost all of the school's 64 teachers would take part in the cleaning operations until Friday, while several parents also volunteered their services in filling up or removing possible mosquito breeding grounds in the school.

DEADLY BITE

Reported number of cases and deaths
(Jan. 1 to Aug. 3, 2005)

Region	Cases	Deaths
I	107	0
II	179	4
CAR	182	1
III	993	5
IV-A	351	4
IV-B	12	0
NCR	1,853	25
V	165	3
VI	271	1
VII	1,198	22
VIII	556	3
IX	1,327	5
X	2,221	49
XI	920	16
XII	1,072	9
ARMM	120	2
CARAGA	781	10
Total	12,308	159

Aedes aegypti

SOURCE: NATIONAL EPIDEMIC SENTINEL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM/ INQGRAPHIC: ERNIE SAMBO

Dengue here to stay; 12,308 taken ill

From page A1

recorded 42 cases from May 1 to July 31 this year alone. Dengue infection peaked at 10 cases from June 5 to June 11.

The village had only two cases from July 24 to 30, the DOH reported yesterday. *(See story above.)*

Another badly afflicted area, General Tinio in Nueva Ecija, had a total of 99 cases and two deaths from July 1 to Aug. 2. Cases there in fact decreased to only six cases in the first two days of the month.

As of Aug. 3, Region 10 registered the biggest number of infections at 2,221, of whom 49 people died, according to the DOH report. Metro Manila came in second with 25 deaths out of 1,853 cases.

Region 9 had only five deaths despite having the third highest number of cases at 1,327. Region 7 recorded 1,198 cases and 22 deaths.

Two types of fever

Areas with a high prevalence of infections, including fatalities, suggested that the victims went down with "dengue hemorrhagic fever," the more common and more fatal of the two types of dengue fever, according to Tayag. The other is "classical dengue" or "break-bone fever."

Dengue is normally characterized by a drop in the platelet count below the normal 100,000. A worst-case scenario requires blood transfusion.

Of the country's 12,308 cases as of last week, Tayag said 30 to 50 percent involved dengue hemorrhagic fever while the rest of the victims had "break-bone fever," which usually causes extreme muscle and joint pains.

Clustering

The DOH reported a "clustering" of dengue cases in at least eight provinces and regions. An area is clustered if it registers three or more cases in four consecutive weeks.

Three of these areas were in Bukidnon: Poblacion in Manolo Fortich, Kalusungay in Malaybalay, and Poblacion in Lantapan. Three more were in Misamis Oriental: Poblacion in Libertad, Poblacion in El Salvador, and Poblacion in Claveria.

Bulacan had two in Loma de Gato in Marilao and Sapang Palay in San Jose del Monte. So did Camiguin province in Agoho in Mambajao and Bonbon in Catarman.

Also affected were Poblacion in Infanta, Quezon; Mambongan in San Lorenzo, Nueva Ecija; and 13 barangays in Cagayan de Oro City.

In Metro Manila, clustering of cases was reported in Sunflower Street in Urdaneta Village, Malabon; F. Varona Street and Parola in Tondo; and Anonas Street in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

As dengue cases continue to soar, Tayag urged the public to take pains in learning about the disease and to take measures to avoid getting infected.

Common symptoms

Common symptoms like high fever that suddenly drops after a few days, listlessness and stomachache should prompt people to immediately seek treatment, he said.

Eliminating breeding grounds for "Aedes aegypti" or dengue-carrying mosquitoes is also a must. They are usually containers holding stagnant water after a rain, allowing mosquitoes to breed.

A common misconception in dealing with dengue hemorrhagic fever involves the administering of aspirin, an antifever drug. Aspirin will just worsen a patient's condition because it prevents blood-clotting, according to Tayag.

"Dengue is here to stay," he said. "You can only reduce significantly the number of mosquito-breeding sites so you can limit the spread of dengue, but you cannot eliminate it totally."

On the average, most Filipinos get all four strains of dengue virus before reaching age 14, he said.

"No one can determine if it was your first or last," he said. "It affects all ages."

This dengue season, 43 percent of all the cases belong to the 1-9 age group, according to the epidemiologist.

Holy water, incense, roses exorcise …

From page A1

dorse the complaint, we hope that he would allow it due course, fair-play and sans pressures from Malacañang," Ocampo said.

Reyes and Fr. Raul "Puti" Enriquez led members of the Akbayan party-list group in sprinkling holy water and burning incense on the grounds and in the halls of the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City to drive away "demons out to hide the truth."

'Leave Satan!'

Reyes sprinkled water on the seal of Congress and on the pictures of the lawmakers, focusing particularly on the picture of De Venecia.

"We vigorously implore the Spirit of Jesus to expel Satan and his evil presence in Malacañang and Congress. We command you Satan in the name of God and the Good of God's People (to) leave Malacañang… leave Congress… leave (the) Senate. Leave Satan! Satan leave! Let go! Let God!" the priest said.

Reyes said he focused on De Venecia's picture because he was the administration's "hatchet man" or anti-impeachment manager in Congress.

"JDV has a conscience and he should be aware about the evil of compromise and the evil of corruption," he said.

"We pray too that the consciences of our representatives be awakened, purified and sensitized to the delicate act of discernment and decision-making particularly crucial to the impeachment process," he added.

Reyes said he hoped that the Rite of Exorcism would work, adding that he had heard rumors that members of the House were being offered P5 million each not to sign the impeachment complaint and P10 million for those who had already signed to withdraw their signatures.

He said acts of evil like dishonesty and cheating in whatever form were in collusion with the Prince of Darkness.

The exorcism began at the gate of the House on Batasan Road where Reyes joined around 30 members of Akbayan and Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales.

Wreath of garlic

Akbayan members brought along a wreath of garlic to "ward off evil."

Intoning the Catholic Church's ancient Rite of Exorcism in Filipino, Reyes led those present in renewing their baptismal vows in rejecting "Satan and all his works."

Reyes said the sprinkling of holy water symbolized "cleansing or purification" while the incense, which wafted throughout Congress through its air-conditioning system, was to remind everyone that it should be a " holy place" and a "House of the Lord."

After the exorcism, Reyes and Enriquez joined Tobias for the Mass with proimpeachment lawmakers, at the House's south-wing lobby.

Show

Administration lawmakers, however, were not amused at what they called a "palabas (show)."

Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita told opposition lawmakers "not to cloak themselves with religion to project themselves as righteous crusaders."

"Are they themselves free of sin here to wave around these theatrics of exorcism rites?" he asked.

He said the opposition should be prepared for an "exacting scrutiny" of the impeachment complaint against the President, which he said was likely to "falter" in the committee on justice.

"Perhaps it is right for them to pray after all, because if we go by the (impeachment complaints filed), they don't stand a ghost of a chance," Zialcita said.

Let truth come out

At the Mass, Tobias urged Ms Arroyo to answer the "call to greatness" by instructing her allies in Congress not to obstruct the impeachment process.

Tobias suggested that the President take a leave of absence to dispel suspicions that she was trying to influence the process.

He appealed to all members of the House to let the truth come out. "Am I asking too much of our public servants or are you also hiding your own agenda? The problem is we cannot seem to know where the truth lies."

Tobias warned of a popular backlash if the impeachment process was subverted.

"Remember, the voices of the poor has not been heard. Do not be sure that the poor are quiet because they are for you. They are quiet because they do not yet know the truth," he said.

"If you do not give them that, the time will come that they will take the truth in their own hands. God forbid this becomes the scenario in our country. So you either give the people the truth or we go down," he said.

Malacañang on attack mode

From page A1

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye twitted the opposition by urging them to "shut down their witness academy because all their graduates are flops and they have not passed the standard of truth and credibility."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said flip-flopping witnesses and their handlers were liable for perjury and proof that they were used by the opposition to try to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo could be a mitigating circumstance.

In an interview, Gonzalez also took Archbishop Oscar Cruz to task for allegedly allowing himself to be manipulated by the opposition in his crusade against jueteng.

"He should go to confession," Gonzalez said of Cruz, who had accused Malacañang of buying off witnesses.

According to Gonzalez, jueteng witnesses Richard Garcia and Abraham Riva could be charged with perjury if it is found that they had made false claims while testifying under oath before the Senate committee investigating illegal gambling.

But Gonzalez, a staunch defender of the President, added that "if what they are saying now is true, they did not perjure anybody, except the Senate."

A mitigating circumstance, he said, would be if it is proven that they were influenced by opposition senators and lawmakers, including Sen. Panfilo Lacson and Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, to drag the President and her relatives into the jueteng mess.

Principals by inducement

In that case, he said, the supposed handlers could be considered "principals by inducement" to the commission of perjury.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday scoffed at Bunye's claim that the jueteng issue against Ms Arroyo was now dead.

"Secretary Bunye is barking at the moon. These two witnesses may have said a lot of things but they have not recanted their testimonies before the Senate."

Besides, Pimentel pointed out, jueteng witnesses Sandra Cam, Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor and Michaelangelo Zuce were standing by their testimonies despite hefty offers from some groups to back out.

Cam, a confessed "bagwoman" of a former police director, had testified that she delivered jueteng proceeds to Representatives Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo at the House of Representatives in December 2004.

Mikey and Iggy, the President's son and brother-in-law, respectively, had flatly denied the charges.

Bunye was asked whether it was mere coinciaence that the two witnesses backtracked while the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, was in town.

"We all know why he was here and that had something to do with the death of his sister," Bunye said. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio*

SIGNED AND SEALED. At the Amai Pakpak Elementary School in Marawi City, Board of Election Inspector Dimayah Maruhom seals ballot boxes from precincts in Malang, Lanao del Sur, prior to their being brought to the provincial capitol. LYN RILLON

There's no clear …

From page A1

Despite allegations of fraud during the balloting, the Commission on Elections said the next ARMM governor would be known today [Wednesday].

"The way things are going, we can proclaim the winning governor and vice governor," Commissioner Florentino Tuazon Jr. said.

Commission on Election Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said people alleging there was cheating in Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and Marawi City should file cases with the poll body and "we will immediately act on them."

The Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), a Comelec-deputized watchdog, and some watchers of political parties reported cases of anomalies, such as ballots being filled on the eve of voting in the five provinces and one city comprising the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Monday's elections were seen as a test of the Arroyo administration's ability to hold fair polls after the "Hello Garci" electoral fraud scandal that pushed Ms Arroyo's presidency to the brink of collapse last month. But there were reports of traditional dirty tricks.

Comelec officials have not released partial figures that would show a winning trend for anyone in the fight for the post of governor, at least.

The official tally of the provincial board of canvassers showed that in Sultan Mastura town, Ampatuan got 6,489 votes, giving him a big margin over his opponents. His rival Mahid Mutilan of Umpao only got 376 and Ibrahim Paglas III 98.

But initial results from Lanao del Sur showed Mutilan with 96,611 votes against Ampatuan's 75,980.

Early results from Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan favored Ampatuan.

At stake are the posts of governor, vice governor and 24 regional legislative assembly seat.

Seesaw battle

Speaking of the voting in Lanao del Sur, where he is in charge of the balloting, Election Commissioner Resurrection Borra said the results so far showed "a seesaw for the regional governor as well as the vice governor."

"By tomorrow [Wednesday], we might be able to proclaim the regional assemblymen for the first and second districts," he said on the ANC network.

Borra agreed with earlier assessments by other Comelec officials that the elections had been largely peaceful.

"For instance, in Lanao del Sur, there was no bloody incident, there was no killing … as of today."

Borra cited the Church-backed Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting for "working effectively and coordinating" with the Comelec in ensuring a successful election. He also gave credit to youth volunteer groups.

"I hope they (PPCRV) remain as they are. They have credible leaders at this point in time," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo hailed the elections as a "triumph of democracy."

"…[This] shows the maturity and great potential of regional autonomy as enshrined in our Constitution," she said in a statement.

Ms Arroyo thanked the people of the ARMM, the police and military, civil society groups and "all stakeholders of democracy" for the successful elections.

"This is an important stage in our quest for political change and in bringing the power of the political center to the regions where the power of the people resides," she said.

For Abalos, the elections were largely peaceful because there were no political fights at the municipal level.

"The rivalry was not that heated because there were no mayoral contests. A few sons of mayors ran for seats in the regional assembly," he said in a phone interview.

The ARMM, as well as many parts of Mindanao, is notorious for the feuds among political clans contesting local posts in their areas. In the past, some used private armies and goons.

Abalos said he was glad that the ARMM residents "chose to prove to the rest of the country that their elections can be peaceful and to disprove that cheating is a cottage industry in this region."

Abalos said the turnout was about 60 percent.

Paglas complained of "having been cheated."

He said he had received reports of pre-filled up ballots and of local officials openly campaigning for candidates during election day.

But Paglas, who refused to identify the candidate who benefited from the alleged irregularities, said he would not file a formal complaint with the Comelec as this "would only be a waste of time."

Still, Paglas would not concede defeat.

"I will not accept that I lost. I was cheated," he said.

'Open cheating'

A retired Army colonel, who asked not to be named, said "It was terrible. The cheating was done openly in my precinct in [Barangay] Broce" in Datu Odin Sinsuat.

He said many of those who voted along with him were not residents of the village.

The same observation was expressed by PPCRV member Fr. Bong Mencias. The incident had been reported to the group's headquarters here.

Others just had to close their eyes to the glaring exercise of one's "right" to commit fraud, he said.

There were also cases of harassment by armed men.

Grenade blasts were reported in Guindulungan and Pagalungan towns in Maguindanao and Cotabato City, particularly in front of the police precinct in Barangay Tamontaka.

In Marawi City, Abalos ordered the relief of the police chief of Lumbatan town, Lanao del Sur, PO3 Esmael Malik, because of his alleged involvement in the purported attempt of Lumbatan Mayor Muslimen Macadatu (not Makabato as earlier reported) to stop the polls in his town. *With Reports from Jeoffrey Maitem, Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie C. Señase and Rolly San Juan, PDI Mindanao Bureau, Christine O. Avendaño and Jerome Aning in Manila*

Vendors thwart OBR take-off

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WITH everything in place, there was only one hitch—vendors on the busy road to Baclaran.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) had this to say with the the postponement of the implementation of the Organized Bus Route (OBR) scheme, the long-shelved single bus dispatch system for which the agency recently had a breakthrough agreement with bus operators and company owners.

"Baclaran is our number one problem. We already have a terminal in Baclaran, but it is now occupied by vendors," said MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios.

Baclaran is a busy destination in Parañaque City frequented by Metro Manila residents and other commuters visiting the popular Redemptorist Church.

Last week, MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando announced that the OBR would finally be implemented this week, after the agency brought the majority of bus companies to its side in what had been a questioned dispatch principle under the scheme.

The OBR, first implemented as a traffic reduction experiment in 2003, was conceived to cut bus volume on traffic-choked Edsa by limiting the number of buses plying the avenue on a given time. On a "first on, first off" basis, buses from different companies would line up in MMDA-established terminals to await dispatch.

Terminals at six endpoints-Navotas, Malanday, Novaliches, Bicutan, Alabang, and Baclaran-had been prepared for the full implementation of the scheme. But while the other five have long been ready, the Baclaran terminal remains unused with the new invasion of illegal vendors, said Vergel de Dios.

He added that the OBR could not be partially implemented by operating the scheme in the other routes, as this would defeat the purpose of having an organized dispatch for all buses traversing Edsa.

"It's either we run the vendors over or we clear them out of the terminal. But of course we cannot consider the first option, so we just have to undertake clearing operations," the traffic chief added.

The agency knows this would be a major hurdle, considering its sidewalk clearing teams in Baclaran had been met with resistance in the past.

Apart from meeting with-Parañaque city officials and the National Capital Region Police Office for the cleanup, Vergel de Dios said the agency would also need police back-up for the new wave of clearing operations since previous incidents had ended up in violence.

'Another gunman shot Luigi'

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN friends of the ABS-CBN television director shot to death outside an upscale Makati bar in June have expressed willingness to give official statements that there was a second gunman involved in the incident, according to a National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agent.

NBI Special Investigator Albert Gaerlan of the NBI Background Investigation Division said the lawyer of director Louis "Luigi" Santiago's family "was already in the process of getting statements from the other witnesses."

"The witnesses are positive that another gunman shot Santiago," Gaerlan said.

Gaerlan said at least five of Santiago's Fil-Am friends initially refused to give their statements to the bureau "because they thought that confessed gunman Oliver Jameiro was a mere scapegoat."

Change of heart

"But when they learned that Jameiro had confessed to indiscriminate firing and denied shooting Santiago, they decided to shed light on what they thought really happened," Gaerlan said.

Santiago's friends reportedly insisted that they heard four gunshots while they were still mauling Jameiro.

Speaking for the Santiago family, lawyer Claro Certeza said that some witnesses were saying that Jameiro was not the gunman.

"The family is asking these people to execute their affidavits," Certeza told the INQUIRER.

The lawyer said witnesses should officially enter their statements "in the name of justice."

In the meantime, Gaerlan said, "We still stand by our earlier conclusion that Jameiro was the lone gunman because all our evidences point to him."

METROBRIEFS

Costly flick

TWO MEN were given life sentences for killing their neighbor who had confronted one of them for flicking his groin while he was sleeping . Bernardo Surio and Maro Humadiao were found guilty of stabbing Teodorico Acol dead after the latter accused Surio of flicking his groin while he was sleeping outside his Quezon City home on Nov. 1, 2001. The two exchanged blows until Acol's mother and wife pacified them, said Acol's brother Florentino. But Surio returned later with Humadiao and two others, brandishing a knife, a broken bottle and a lead pipe, said Florentino. Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 81 Judge Ma. Theresa Yadao said the two used their superior strength over the victim and found them guilty of murder. Surio and Humadiao were also ordered to pay P100,000 each to Acol's heirs. *DJ Yap*

MAG-INGAT SA MGA "SENSITIBONG" BAGAY.

TIBON

Death for dad

A MANILA judge yesterday meted out the double death penalty to a father accused of killing his two young sons seven years ago. Judge Silvino Pampilo Jr. of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 26 imposed the maximum penalty on Honorio Tibon, 40, a former Overseas Filipino Worker, after he found him guilty of two counts of parricide. Pamilo also ordered Tibon to indemnify the heirs of victims Reguel Albert, 2, and Keen Gist, 3, P150,000 in damages. Relatives of the accused told the court that Tibon killed his children upon learning that Gina was having an affair.They added that days prior to the incident, the accused would often get drunk and beat up his kids. Tibon had denied the accusation, and pleaded insanity in his defense. *Tina G. Santos*

'4 o'clock habit' poised against dengue

FIGHTING dengue should be a habit.

With that in mind, Caloocan City recently launched a campaign aimed at developing in residents a "4 o'clock habit" of cleaning their surroundings to destroy possible breeding areas of dengue-carrying mosquitoes, said Mayor Enrico Echeverri.

Mosquitoes who bite during the day, called Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus, which breed in stagnant water, transmit the disease to all, regardless of age and physical well-being.

Operations, like fogging, have been intensified, especially in areas where dengue was previously reported.

The local health department also launched an information campaign to fight and avoid the disease.

Meanwhile, local health officials are not taking chances.

"We refer possible dengue cases to San Lazaro (Hospital in Manila) because they have the facilities to treat the patient right away," said Dr. Jocelyn Galiza of the city's President Diosdado Macapagal Memorial Center.

Caloocan's lone public hospital has had only two possible dengue cases since June.

Galiza advised parents to clean their surroundings and take lots of fluids and vitamin C.

Across Metro Manila in Las Piñas, Mayor Imelda T. Aguilar ordered city officials to clean up canals, creeks and other waterways.

She also told doctors and health workers to monitor public school students to ensure their safety.

The mayor also urged private school administrators to do the same.

"Prevention is still better," she said. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Mother, wife receive medals of hero-cops

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A MOTHER and a wife lost their loved ones in separate incidents. But the other day, each of them went home with a medal that symbolized the heroism and the life lost by their loved ones.

On Monday, Glenalda Bernal and Felicidad Nollido received the *Medalya ng Kagalingan* awarded by National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Vidal Querol to SP01 Larry Bernal and P01 Anselmo Fernandez III, who died in the line of duty.

Bernal, of the Pasay City Mobile Patrol Division was killed after midnight on July 29 while patrolling a "holdup hotspot" in the city. A suspected holdup man shot him in the chest and arm.

During the recognition rites at the NCRPO grounds, Bernal's wife broke into tears as Querol pinned the medal on her white blouse.

"I hope it was my husband who was personally receiving the award," said Glenalda in an interview after the ceremony.

When the Philippine National Police Anthem was sung, the widow broke into tears because her husband's colleagues had told her that it was the song Bernal was singing before he was shot.

"I am so touched by the line: *Iaalay ang isang buhay*," she related, adding that it was what her husband did—save another's life.

Bernal was set to retire last January but continued his service because his three sons aged 17, 14 and 4 were still in school.

Nollido said her son, Hernandez, was true to his job as a member of the NCRPO special weapons and tactics team.

Hernandez was killed in a holdup at the West Service Road in Parañaque City in February this year.

Nollido had nothing but tears when she recounted her memories with her 28-year-old son.

"He was a quiet man. Whenever I scolded him he would just listen to me and not answer back," she said.

She also added that her son was the breadwinner and was supporting his younger brother who was still in school.

"I hope what happened to my son would serve as a lesson to other policemen. I hope they would show that they are devoted to their profession," she said.

Nollido and Bernal said they would display the medals with Hernandez and Bernal's belongings.

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Ramos slay suspect eyed as state witness

By Tarra V. Quismundo

ONE OF three men police had linked to the killing of diplomat Alicia Ramos on April 24 is being eyed as a possible state witness.

"I have reserved my right in court to present Joel Ablay as a state witness," said Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco in a pre-trial hearing yesterday. "He was the first one who was very helpful and cooperative, and had identified the other participants in the crime."

Ablay was arrested after he made a tearful confession about his participation in the crime over a round of drinks with friends, a few days after Ramos, then assistant foreign secretary, was killed inside her house on 5552 Boyle Street, Barangay Palanan, Makati City.

A companion, Michael Cenil, was arrested later. The alleged mastermind, Roberto Lumagui, surrendered two weeks after the killing after Ablay and Cenil said he had been a participant in the crime.

The three were later accused of breaking into the Ramos house where they allegedly stole some P1 million worth of valuables. Ramos died of suffocation after she was gagged and hogtied during the robbery.

During the arraignment for charges of robbery with homicide, the three men entered a not guilty plea in the sala of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 147 Judge Maria Cristina Cornejo.

"Ablay's testimony is important in the sense that he would testify that it was Lumagui who had recruited them and planned the whole thing. He has direct knowledge of the incident," Velasco said, referring to what Ablay had told even the media in earlier interviews.

Velasco's proposal to make Ablay a prosecution witness would mean dropping the latter from the list of the accused and putting him under government protection. Ablay is now detained with Cenil and Lumagui at the Makati City Jail.

"The condition is that Ablay should plead guilty to the charges first before we request that the charges be dropped. He said he would talk to his lawyer about this," said Velasco.

Ablay can then withdraw the not guilty plea he made earlier, and seek a re-arraignment later. "This would pave the way for the state prosecutor to file a formal motion for his discharge as a state witness," Velasco added.

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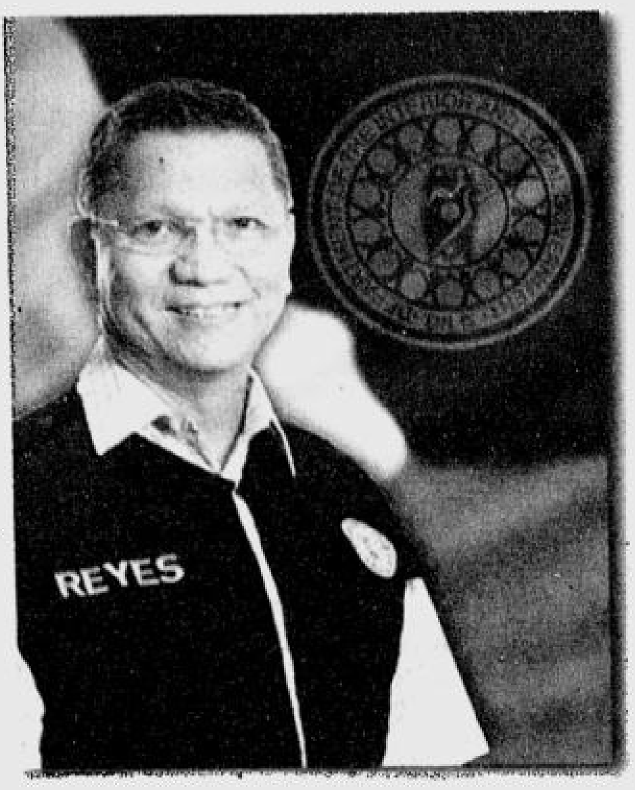

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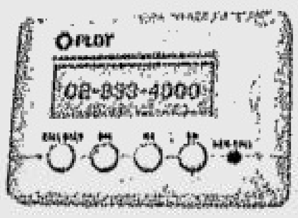

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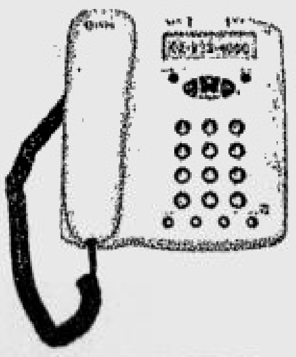

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BASKETBALL: NBA Rocky Mountain Revue–Mavs vs Spurs; 8 a.m. (r – 11 p.m.); Solar Sports—It's a Texas shoot-out as Dallas and San Antonio clash in this off-season duel.

China vs Australia; 8:30 p.m.; STAR Sports–Asia powerhouse China takes on the Aussies down under.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

'Squeeze play' clips Obet's powers

President appoints Peping, Ramirez as lead SEAG movers

By Musong R. Castillo

MALACAÑANG has had enough of the delays and the uncertainties.

PAGDANGANAN

Worried over the snail's pace of the Games preparations, President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday clipped Roberto Pagdanganan's powers as chief organizer of the Southeast Asian Games.

In a move meant to get the SEAG organizing committee (Philsoc) up to speed, the President gave Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez more responsibilities to prepare the country for the Games slated Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

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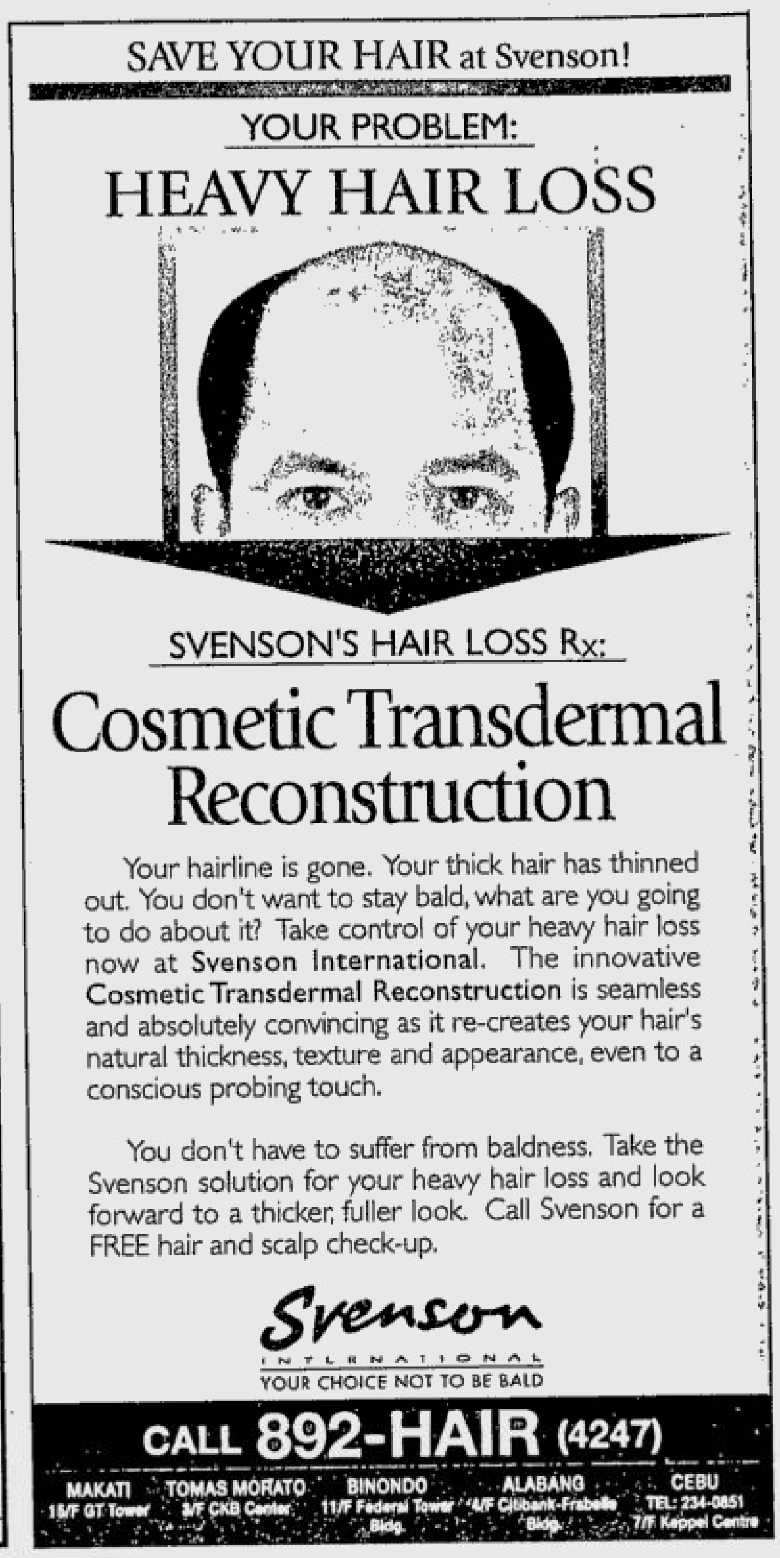
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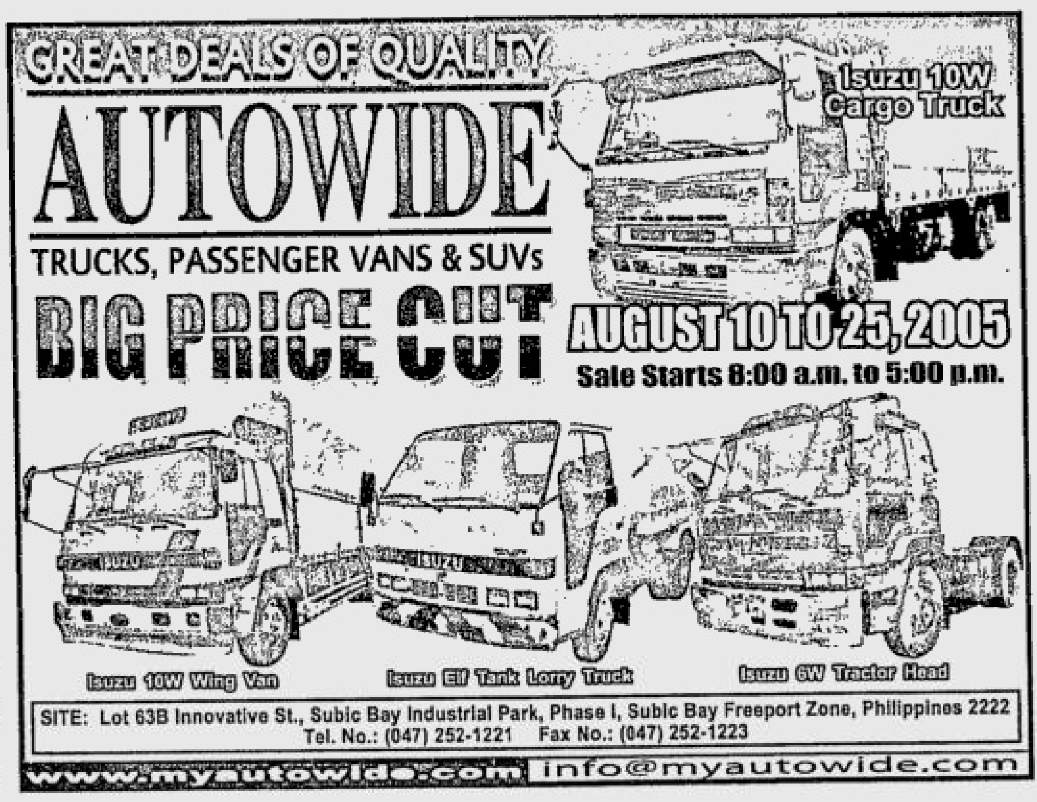
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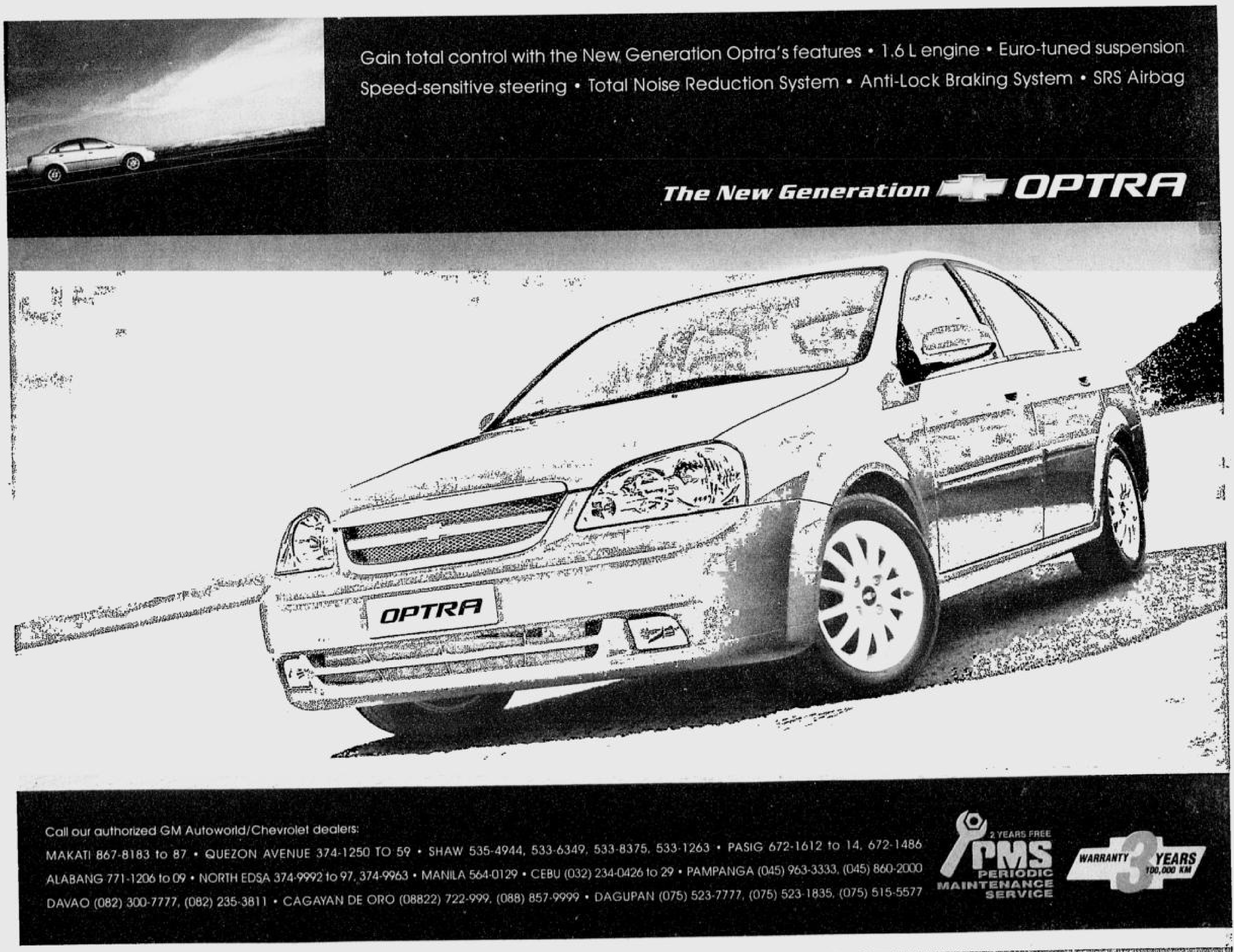
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Gullas urges BAP to 'stop fighting a lost cause'

GULLAS

By Musong R. Castillo

LONGTIME basketball association official and Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas yesterday urged the Basketball Association of the Philippines to "stop fighting a lost cause" and "rally behind the new cage body if it wants to show nationalism."

Gullas' call came as the Philippine Sports Commission yesterday gave the Philippine Basketball Federation "conditional recognition" which the cage body can use to be accepted into the international federation (Fiba).

Gullas, who served in the BAP board during the time of former president Lito Puyat, was originally the first choice of the PBF board to be its first president.

But old age and duties in Congress made him beg off. Instead, Mauricio "Moying" Martelino, himself also a veteran BAP and Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) official, was elected to the top PBF post.

Gullas urged the BAP to accept its expulsion from the Philippine Olympic Committee and to give the PBF all the room to perform its duty as the governing body for basketball.

Also yesterday, PSC chair Butch Ramirez and commissioner Richie Garcia said Filipinos cannot stand the prospect of the Philippines' failure to defend its basketball title in the Southeast Asian Games.

"What we want is for us to be able to field a (basketball) team for the Southeast Asian Games," Garcia told the INQUIRER. "*Sabi nga, matalo na tayo sa lahat ng* sport, *huwag lang sa* basketball (It's said that we can take it if we lose in every sport, but not in basketball)."

"It (PSC's conditional recognition) is a tool they can use," Garcia said, referring to the Fiba recognition which the PBF is pursuing in time for the Philippines' defense of the cage gold in the SEAG this November.

Martelino flew to Hong Kong last Saturday to personally hand over pertinent documents of the organization to Fiba president Carl Ching Meng Ky.

Martelino also briefed the Fiba official on the circumstances behind the expulsion of the BAP from the cage body.

Dolphins battle Bombers today

PCU's Gabriel Espinas (center) will again be a marked man when the Dolphins clash with the JRU Bombers today. RYAN LIM

GAMES TODAY (Cuneta Astrodome)
11:30 a.m.—JRU vs PCU (Jrs)
2 p.m.—JRU vs PCU (Srs)
4 p.m.—St. Benilde vs Mapua (Srs)

THE PRESSURE is on for the Philippine Christian U Dolphins as they try to regain their dominating form against the pumped-up Jose Rizal U Bombers in the NCAA basketball tournament at 2 p.m. today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The defending champions have struggled in their first two games in the second round of elimination.

The Dolphins absorbed a 78-72 loss against a rejuvenated San Beda Lions in the round opener. Four days later, the Dolphins had to scramble in the closing minutes to forge a 62-58 win over the St. Benilde Blazers.

"I keep reminding the players that no team is a pushover," said PCU coach Junel Baculi. "All the teams have a good coaching staff so we have to work hard every game."

The Mapua Cardinals are hoping to have learned the same lesson when they take on the Blazers at 4 p.m.

The Cardinals hardly looked like the team that coasted to a 5-2 start after back-to-back losses against the cellar-dwelling Bombers and the University of Perpetual Help Altas.

Rookie Kelvin dele Peña and Joferson Gonzales, the Cardinals' top gunners this season, played below par in both games.

The Dolphins' top duo—Gabby Espinas and Robert Sanz—has also been delivering subpar performances, combining for only 13 points in their win against the Blazers.

"We have to address this problem because they are the leaders of this team," said Baculi. "I'm very disappointed that they're not performing in our recent games."

Baculi credited his second stringers for stepping up, particularly point guard Derryl Santos and big men Carlos Cecilia, Beau Belga and Joel Solis.

The Bombers are upbeat after shocking the Cardinals, 51-43, last Monday.

Senior guard Jenciano Domancas and Armando Mañiego, who teamed up for 27 points against the Cardinals, will again be at the helm of the Bombers' offense. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Young Fil-Sino men behind game-fixing

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is monitoring a group of young Filipino-Chinese men said to be behind the game-fixing and illegal betting activities in NCAA basketball game venues. "We are determining this group's modus operandi and confirming reports that its members have been manipulating the game results to earn a lot of money," NBI Special Action Unit chief Vicente de Guzman III said. He described the suspected members of the illegal gambling group as "only in their mid-20s. It appears that the suspects are part of an organized gambling group because they earn a huge amount of cash from bettors and use this to reportedly pay top-scoring players to control the results of the game," De Guzman said. Four or five agents have also been monitoring players suspected of engaging in point shaving, he added. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Mantawi five snaps Taguig's victory run

TAGUIG CITY—Hapee/Dewfoam-backed Mantawi steadied in the homestretch to stop Forward Taguig's six-game winning run, 97-85, Monday night at the C.P. Tiñga gym here.

Coach Jun Noel's Sparkling Nights led from the start, but when Mayor Freddie Tiñga's Taguig cagers threatened at 80-81 in the last 4:39, former Cavite Insurer McDonald Santos fueled a 6-0 Mantawi run to make it 87-80 going into the final two minutes.

"Beating the number one team in the Northern Conference is a big accomplishment," said Noel later.

Mantawi's seventh win in 11 games tied it with defending champion Tribu Sugbu in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Sunbolt Sports Drink, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Taguig still leads the Northern Conference at 6-1, followed by Cavite (7-5), Laguna (5-5), Parañaque (5-7), Baguio (2-5) and Manila (0-4).

Ozamiz Cotta paces the Southern Conference at 7-2, followed by Tribu and Mantawi, Iligan (6-4), Valencia (6-5), Cagayan de Oro (3-4), Iloilo (3-7) and Zanorte (1-8).

Action resumes tomorrow with Taguig facing Manila at 4 p.m. at the San Juan gym and Laguna taking on Ozamiz at 6 p.m. at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym in Ozamiz City.

'Squeeze play' clips . . .

From page A21

In effect, Cojuangco and Ramirez assumed the bulk of Pagdanganan's duties, making the Philsoc chair a "mere presiding officer of the committee," according to a top Palace official.

The official described the President's move as a "squeeze play" to make certain Philsoc officials "realize that time is running out" on the preparations for the Games.

Pagdanganan was conspicuously absent during a dinner hosted in a Manila restaurant Monday by Cojuangco and attended by Ramirez, POC chair Robert Aventajado, first vice president Rep. Monico Puentevella and POC special assistant Go Teng Kok, among others.

Cojuangco, speaking in measured tones, admitted that Pagdanganan was not invited to the dinner.

"I did not know that this dinner would turn out to be an open forum, that's why Obet is not here," Cojuangco said in Filipino.

"We're not happy with the preparations, particularly the marketing aspect, and so we are meeting to find ways to improve coordination among the concerned sectors."

The dinner came a week after a meeting among officials of the Philsoc, in which Cojuangco is also vice chair, nearly deteriorated into a fist fight.

According to a Philsoc insider, the protagonists argued heatedly over the delays in Games preparations and over the responsibilities of certain members in the committee.

With less than four months left before the Games, the Philsoc is still scrounging for about P400 million more in funds.

The President, who promised the Philsoc P300 million from her Social Fund, told Cojuangco and Ramirez to look for more funds elsewhere.

Cojuangco, who was appointed by the President as the Philsoc's chief executive officer, said there's little time left to raise the needed cash.

Pagdanganan was retained as chair while Ramirez was named chief operating officer.

Yesterday, Cojuangco and Ramirez met with the heads of the Philsoc's task groups at their new offices at the Philippine International Convention Center.

A press release from Malacañang confirmed the appointments of Cojuangco and Ramirez. It quoted the President as exhorting the Filipino "to come forward and help carry the torch of cooperation and the banner of One Team Philippines."

Hawks pluck No. 79; St. Clare stays clean

By Marc Anthony Reyes

UNIVERSITY of Manila expectedly plucked its 79th victory but it was St. Clare's own winning run that provided the thrill during yesterday's seniors games of the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities at the UM Gym.

The Hawks methodically brushed off New Era University, 79-60, to chalk their sixth triumph in as many games this season and further extend their unbeaten streak to 79 dating back to the league's inception in 2001.

Though UM's win, anchored on certified stars Ryan Regalado, Gener Bernados and Onofre Napiza, was well deserved, the Hawks' prolonged success is fast becoming an ordinary thing in the league.

The Hunters fell to 3-3 despite the all-around efforts of Joseph Perlas and Jeff de Guzman. Perlas has 11 points, five rebounds and three assists, while De Guzman accounted for 10 points, four rebounds and two assists.

St. Clare scored an exciting 63-61 come-from-behind victory over Centro Escolar to stretch its own winning run to five in as many starts.

Chris Manalili nailed the winning basket in the final 24 seconds to bail the Saints out after trailing most of the game and climbing from as deep as 15 points in the last six minutes.

"So far we were able to re-group and make adjustments during crucial times of the game," said St. Clare coach Joel Dualan.

Earlier, AMA Computer drubbed winless Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay, 98-85. Archie Dublin led the Eagles with 22 points, while George Spaulding turned in 15 points and eight rebounds. Josel Suarez had 10 points and Edward Penaflorida tallied nine points and nine rebounds for PLP.

Can Pacquiao, late again, solve an easy quiz?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(RIGHT-ON: Boxer Z Gorres did not just leave the Buddy McGirt camp for home, the homesick fighter had repeatedly begged his manager and finally got the nod to be reunited with his family despite the need to have another bout in the United States. Rudy Salud, Gorres' erstwhile main handler, made this clarification yesterday… Gov. Manny Piñol has vowed to come back after his team scored an overwhelming success with the North Cotabato fruit and food fair at the SM Megamall over the weekend. Piñol is also begging the indulgence of city-dwellers whose thirst for fresh goodies from his province they failed to fully assuage despite the tons and tons of daily supply replenishment.)

* * *

MANNY Pacquiao checked in with excess poundage, but he nevertheless breezed through the PAL counter for his departure to California Sunday evening.

The country's richest, most famous athlete appeared pudgy, definitely over the 130-pound limit in the super-featherweight division where he campaigns now.

No problem. It was not yet the weigh-in for his next fight.

Yes, they do use generous scales for famous people in airport counters.

However, problem could crop up once Pacquiao checks in at the Wild Card Boxing Club in downtown Hollywood to train for his next fight scheduled on Sept. 10.

* * *

That leaves the overweight Pacquiao only a full month to train, granting he would also hit the road and do gym work on Sundays.

No problem again? Pacquiao should cut corners in order to hit peak form.

But, then, the guy is no stranger to cramming.

He could train for only three weeks then claim he's already at his best.

He did exactly that against Thailand's Fahsan 3-K Battery in Taguig last December.

What happened was he ran short of wind starting the third round.

Pacquiao was lucky to have scored a knockout shortly after he had started to huff and puff.

* * *

On Sept. 10, Pacquiao fights a Mexican with a clearly better record than Fahsan.

Hector Velasquez flashes stronger credentials, the reason Pacquiao has opted to train for a full month.

Yes, only 30 days, give and take the necessary breaks.

If to a carefree school kid, that's as foolish as again coming late to class.

Pacquiao was all the while aware Velasquez would be an easy quiz?

"If Manny is really serious about his next fight, why only a month?" wondered fight expert Hermie Rivera.

It's no secret Pacquiao is being set up against Erik Morales, his conqueror, in a monumental rematch in Las Vegas tentatively set in January.

In fact, Morales is fighting in the same Staples card on Sept. 10.

Rivera is sincerely convinced promoters would not take a risk to endanger Morales-Pacquiao II, considering the fortune they had raked with the rivalry last March.

* * *

Anyway, we asked Cebu boxing expert and international judge Salven Lagumbay to check on Velasquez who, it would turn out, has knocked out all but one of his last five victims.

One thing is sure, Lagumbay reports, Velasquez is no pushover.

"I just came from Phuket where I judged a WBO fight," Lagumbay confides. "I met Marco Antonio Barrera's cutman there and he said Manny would be foolish if he takes Velasquez lightly."

Fair warning there. But sorry to report that, from the look of things, Pacquiao didn't appear sufficiently concerned about his next assignment.

In fact, his Pinoy handler, Buboy Fernandez, has expressed dismay over Pacquiao's poor form a month before the Velasquez clash.

Fernandez rued that Pacquiao, after a four-and-half-month lay-off, could end up overworking his system given the limited schedule.

* * *

Fernandez has described Pacquiao's next Mexican foe as "a strong body puncher with a quick jab."

From that limited info, it could be deduced that Velasquez has the makings of a slugger.

This could only mean he cannot be expected to be as sharp and elusive as, say, the formidable Erik Morales.

Again, Hermie Rivera swears promoters won't be silly to get in someone who can't fit into Pacquiao's slambang, slashing style.

That sounds quite believable. The next big promotion could materialize only if Pacquiao gets fed with a robot that stands still and waits to be floored.

But don't get totally deceived. Dumb, ill-prepared kids, who always come late, often fumble and fail even the easiest quiz.

SPORTSWATCH

Pio-Makati Stars nip Stallions in OT

THE PIO-MAKATI Stars banked on playmaker Dennis Rodriguez's triple in the last four seconds of extra time to nip Manuel L. Quezon University's gritty Stallions, 92-90, Sunday in the 9th Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament at the Washington gym in Makati City. Mediatrix leaned on Bosyo Diaz's basket in the closing seconds to shock Far Eastern Insurance-backed Cavite, 76-75, in the other game.

21 US bets spice up Samsung tourney

THE FOURTH Samsung Best of the Best National Taekwondo Championships kick off today at the Glorietta Activity Center with 21 young jins from the United States joining top local players in the battle for honors. This marks the first time in four years that American players will be seeing action. Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert Aventajado presided over the launching of the five-day tournament yesterday.

ABC-5 airs games of national five today

THE RP basketball team's game against Aoshen of China in the Global Hoops Summit in Las Vegas will be shown today at 7 p.m. on ABC-5. ABC Sports will also air the stint of the PBA-backed national squad in the recent Jones Cup in Taiwan against Korea tomorrow at 7 p.m. On Friday, the Global Hoops Summit encounter between the national team and Billy Duffy and Associates, made up of US collegiate standouts, will be shown on the same time slot.

LGBA 7-Stag Derby series slated

WHO will be the next winner of the coveted Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association (LGBA) Breeder of the Year award? The quest starts via the "7-Stag Derby" on Sept. 26, 28 and Oct. 3 at the Araneta Coliseum. The second leg (7-stag) will be on Oct. 10, 13 and 18. Past Breeder of the Year winners were Mike and Pete Buendia of Batangas in 2001, Rep. Larry Wacnang of Kalinga Apayao (2002), Blandy Tolentino of Laguna (2003) and Manuel Lui of Pangasinan (2004). For inquiries, call 926–7808, 924–5072 or 0920–5851940 (look for Taz Lunazco).

RACING

AT SANTA ANA
BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Carte Blanche/Nagmamahal 2. He's So Lucky 3. Peek A Boo 4. Precious Moment
Race 2—1. Holy King 2. Lucky Joe 3. Nitty Gritty 4. Words of Joy
Race 3—1. Hepburn 2. Cheska Run 3. Somos O No Somos 4. Quickie 5. Scarab
Race 4—1. U Are My Sunshine 2. Commodore Tiger 3. Western Legend 4. Vitality
Race 5—1. Sugar Ray 2. E Mail 3. Jaw Breaker 4. Naglalabyog 5. Carolina Belle
Race 6—1. Moab 2. Don Paolo 3. Sensational 4 Pride of Masbate
Race 7—1. Kaori Yoks 2. Beautiful Jaeda 3. Fantasia/Kawiliwili 5. Jaje/Collective Dreams 5. American Beauty
Race 8—1. Hazil Coming 2 Apex 3. Gutsy 4. Jokes Only 5. Queen's Gold 6. Stingray

A greedy broker

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

ON THE invitation of old friends, I flew to Cebu last weekend to witness the induction of businessman Michel Lhuillier as BAP vice president for the Visayas and of city councilor Raul "Yayoy" Alcoseba as BAP director for Region 7.

I felt a bit nostalgic. My kinship with Michel and Yayoy dates back 20 years, to 1986, when Michel's immensely popular Lhuillier Jewelers, coached then by Yayoy, was first introduced to RP hoopdom. The Cebu-based Jewelers—composed of Samboy Lim, Jojo Lastimosa, Al Solis, Apet Jao, Peter Aguilar, Eton Navarro and Jay Ramirez, younger brother of PSC chair Butch Ramirez, who all became PBA stars—won the PABL championship against Hope Cigarettes in their maiden appearance. As part of the group, that moment of triumph gave me an emotional high.

And now two decades later, I was reunited with Michel, Yayoy and the other Lhuillier guys who managed to stay together after all these years. Yayoy said his boss has continued to promote basketball since the PABL days, and he himself has continued to coach the team, winning titles in the NBC, the URBL and Cebu tournaments. He admitted he is very excited about the prospect of training the RP men's team which will now be based in Cebu, whether or not we get to play in the SEA Games.

* * *

Michel has made the same commitment. He would bankroll the men's basketball team to the SEAG, no matter what, "for love of country and the sport."

Incidentally, Yayoy mentioned during our post-dinner conversation that he was surprised to read in the papers that Shell's PBA franchise was being sold to Harbour Centre for only P45 million.

"That franchise was being offered to Michel for P100 million, an amount we found too stiff," said Yayoy. Because of this, the deal never got off the ground.

I tried to squeeze the name of the greedy broker out of Yayoy, but his lips were sealed. He hinted that the croc was someone known to me.

Hey, for all we know, the middleman was selling two PBA franchises to Michel, that's why he was charging double. The extra P10 million represents his broker's fee.

* * *

A colleague swears it was Red Bull cager Mick Pennisi he saw a few days ago along Edsa, just before the Ortigas flyover.

Pennisi, he said, was driving a maroon Honda CRV which was hit by a pickup truck.

"He was out of the vehicle, arguing with the driver of the pickup. I'm sure it was him," the scribe said.

Nothing that mysterious really about Pennisi's presence here. If I'm not mistaken, Mick's Filipina wife and two kids are still here in Manila. Maybe he's visiting.

"I think something should be done to get these guys and other Fil-Ams like Eric Menk and Rudy Hatfield to return to active duty in the PBA when the next season opens in October. I strongly feel they should be granted some sort of amnesty," the scribe said.

Actually, one of the governors suggested this to the board in one of their recent board meetings. His proposal was immediately shot down, though.

* * *

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has offered the use of the San Juan Gym to the RP women's team which has been barred by PSC chair Butch Ramirez from using the Rizal Coliseum in Vito Cruz.

Jinggoy built the San Juan Gym during his tenure as mayor of the municipality.

"*Ako ang nagpatayo nun*, but you'll have to seek permission from the new mayor before you can use it," Jinggoy said.

In case you didn't know, the new mayor is Jinggoy's half-brother, JV Ejercito.

* * *

HOOPVINE: Congratulations to Dr. Raul "George" Canlas who was recently appointed medical supervisor by the Fiba for the 2006 World Basketball Championships in Saitama, Japan . . . Arnold Jimenez of Cebu wrote to find out what will happen to Shell's draft picks . . . "*Wala na*, they're deemed lost," texted PBA operations chief Rickie Santos . . . Jay W. San Luis, a Shell fan since the days when Leo Austria and Bogs Adornado were still playing for the team, mourns the disbandment of his favorite squad. "What will happen to the coaching staff now?" he wanted to know. I'm told that Leo will return to Welcoat as consultant. I don't know about the others… "You will be proven right, Beth, the problem is the clash of egos among the people in Philippine basketball," e-mailed Nat Sagun… Found a note buried deep in my notebook which I promised Roy Ordiales, marketing manager of Sportshouse, one of the biggest dealers of Carlton badminton racquets—the brand being endorsed by world mixed doubles champs Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms—I would publish. This is dated but a promise is a promise. Roy identified the one Nathan gave away to the crowd as the Airblade Tour model which he said is worth (only) P6,600.

Sharapova has shot at No. 1

CARSON, California—Maria Sharapova is within three games of becoming the first Russian to be ranked No. 1 in the world in women's tennis. And she hopes to get it in a tennis tournament where a couple of her top rivals are absent.

SHARAPOVA

Still, it's not going to be easy as Jie Zheng of China showed, scoring an upset over 11th-seeded Shinobu Asagoe of Japan, 6-7 (3), 6-3, 6-0, Monday in the first round of the JP-Morgan Chase Open.

The first hurdle for Sharapova will be fellow Russian Maria Kirilenko, who defeated American Marissa Irvin, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2.

Francesca Schiavone , the 13th seed, beat Dally Randriantefy, 7-5, 6-3; 14th-seeded Gisela Dulko defeated Fabiola Zuluaga, 6-3, 6-3, and 16th-seeded Anna Chakvetadze eliminated Li Na, 7-5, 6-4.

The 18-year-old Sharapova will become the first Russian player to reach No. 1 in the WTA rankings if she wins three matches here, the third stop in the women's US Open Series.

World No. 1 Lindsay Davenport withdrew for the second week in a row due to back problems. Serena Williams and Vera Zvonareva also backed out this week because of ankle problems. *AP*

Bekele tops '10,000'

HELSINKI, Finland—Ethiopia's Kenenisa Bekele capped a tragic year in which he lost his fiancee with an emotional win in the 10,000 meters at the world athletics championships Monday.

One year after ripping her Achilles tendon, Sweden's Kajsa Bergqvist completed an amazing comeback by winning the high jump with a world leading jump of 2.02 m. American Chaunte Howard pushed her all the way with a personal best of 2.00 for silver.

Confirming his domination of long distance running during a one-two Ethiopian finish, the defending and Olympic champion relied on his trademark finishing kick to take the field apart over the last lap and win ahead of Sileshi Sihine.

"It is very important for me," Bekele said of his win. "This year, after I lost my fiancee. It's tragic.

"I have sadness in my heart."

Alem Techale died after collapsing during a training session with Bekele on Jan. 4. *AP*

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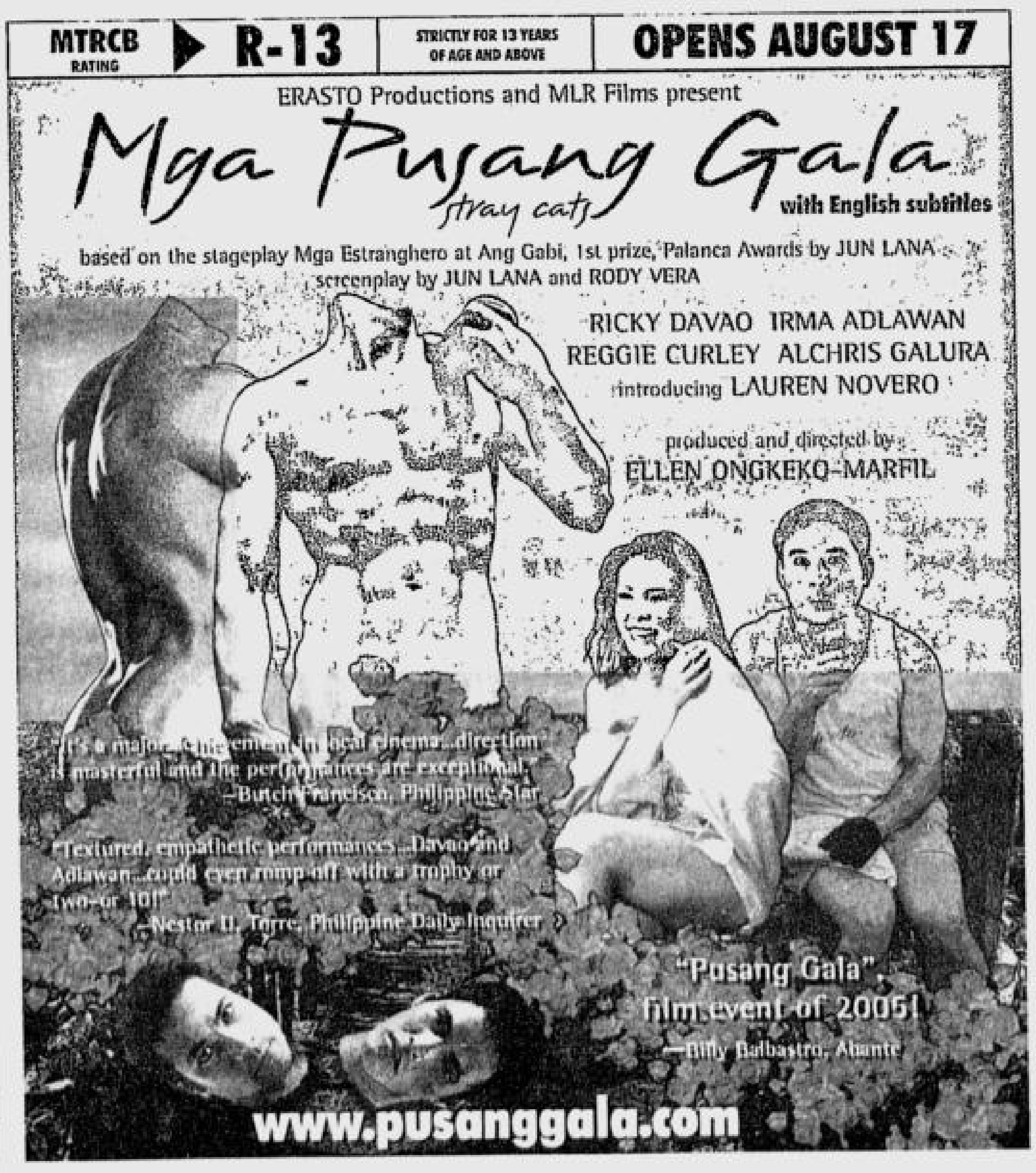

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—Butch Francisco, Philippine Star
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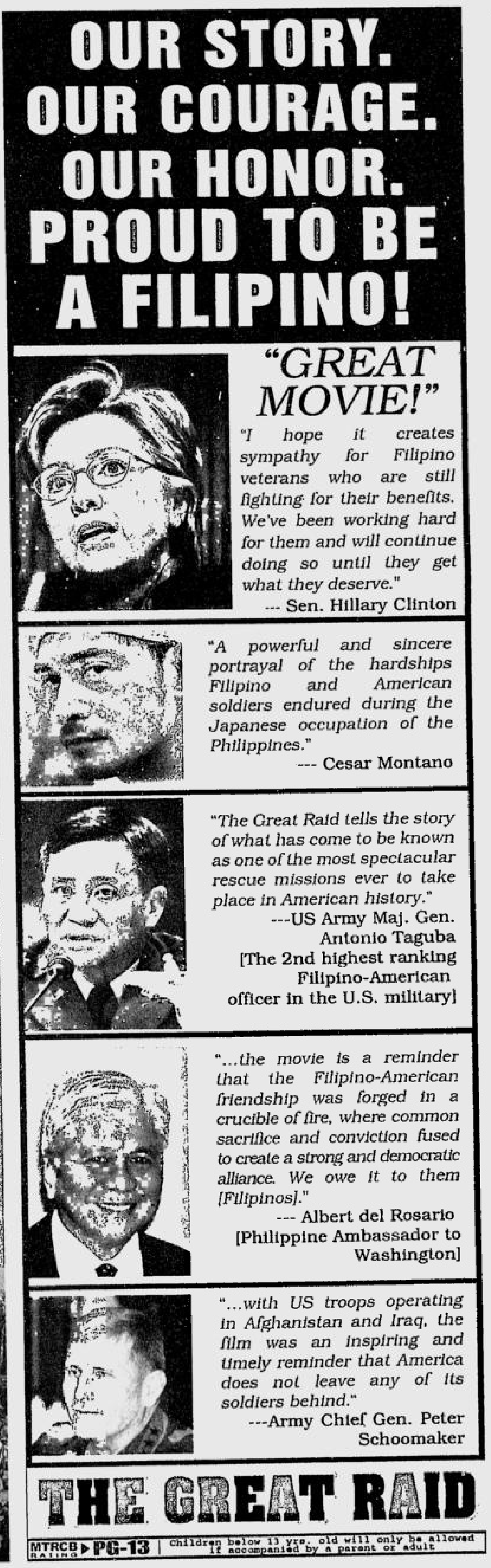

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--- Sen. Hillary Clinton

"A powerful and sincere portrayal of the hardships Filipino and American soldiers endured during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines."
--- Cesar Montano

"The Great Raid tells the story of what has come to be known as one of the most spectacular rescue missions ever to take place in American history."
---US Army Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba
[The 2nd highest ranking Filipino-American officer in the U.S. military]

"...the movie is a reminder that the Filipino-American friendship was forged in a crucible of fire, where common sacrifice and conviction fused to create a strong and democratic alliance. We owe it to them [Filipinos]."
--- Albert del Rosario
[Philippine Ambassador to Washington]

"...with US troops operating in Afghanistan and Iraq, the film was an inspiring and timely reminder that America does not leave any of its soldiers behind."
---Army Chief Gen. Peter Schoomaker

THE GREAT RAID
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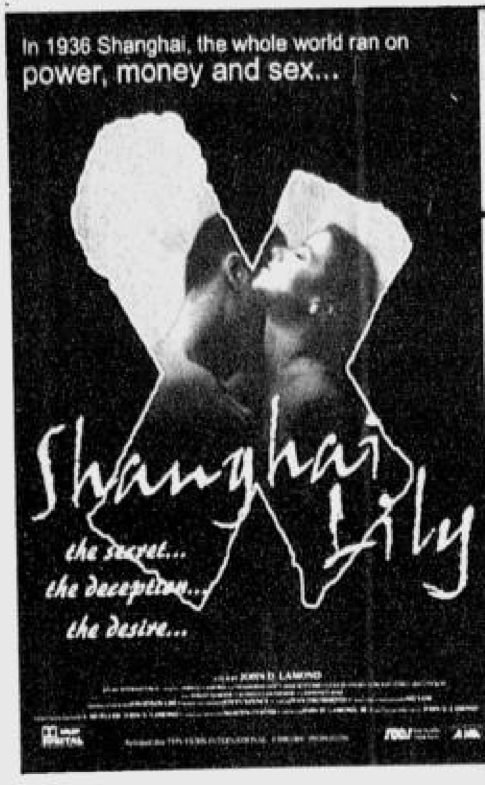
KATE HUDSON
GENA ROWLANDS
PETER SARSGAARD
AND JOHN HURT
FEARING IS BELIEVING
THE SKELETON KEY
AUGUST 17
FROM THE WRITER OF THE RING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THE GREAT RAID
1:25 / 4:10 / 6:55 / 9:40
CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
12:55 / 3:25 / 5:55 / 8:25
CRASH
1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
STEALTH
2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
BEWITCHED 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
D' ANOTHERS
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
IF ONLY
1:00 / 3:15 / 5:30 / 7:45 / 10:00
WEDDING CRASHERS
1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20
THE ISLAND
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
① D' ANOTHERS
1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00
② THE GREAT RAID
12:25 / 3:10 / 5:55 / 8:40
③ BEWITCHED
12:55 / 3:25 / 5:55 / 8:25
④ EYE INFINITY
12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00
⑤ STEALTH
12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
FUNK FEST! PAROKYA NI EDGAR CONCERT
August 12, Friday, 7 pm
UAAP - NCAA ALL STAR GAMES
August 13, Saturday
MTV PILIPINAS 2005 AWARDS
August 25, Thursday 8 pm
CUSA BASKETBALL LEAGUE
August 26, Friday OPENING GAMES

CENTER EVENTS
SALE EVENTS: *Marks & Spencer at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall, Freeway at the Ground Floor of Ali Mall, and Oxygen at the 2nd Floor of Farmers Plaza*
EXHIBIT: *DMC Display ongoing until August 12 at the LRT Concourse Area on Level 2 of Gateway Mall*
PERFORMANCES: *Cool Live Jazz at the Gateway Courtyard from 9 to 11pm featuring Mishka Adams & The Blue Echoes on August 12 and Brass Munkeys on August 13*

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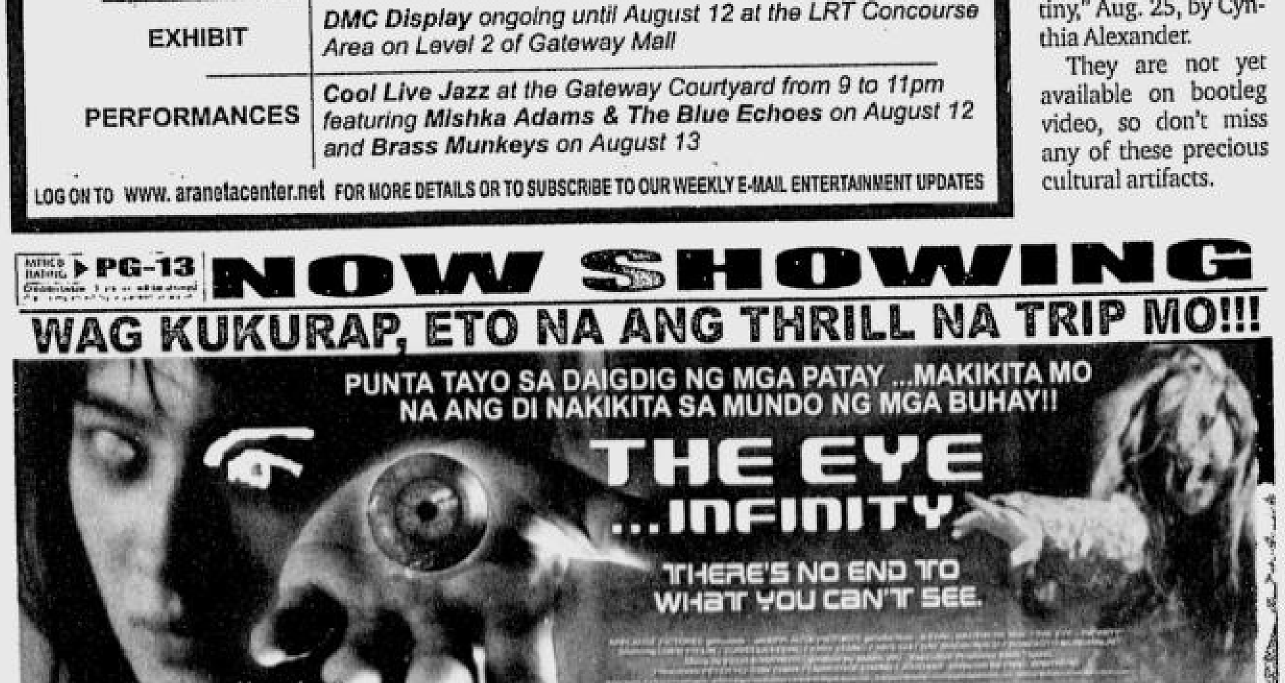
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FORTISSIMO
applause pictures

WARNING: The 'Rite Of Eight' presented in this film is the most powerful resort to make contact with the spiritual world. Psychics never doubt its authenticity so don't try it alone!!

US top 10 films

LOS ANGELES—The top 10 movies last week in North American theaters, based on estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc., official box office tracker:

1) "The Dukes of Hazzard," $30.6M

2) "The Wedding Crashers," $16.5M million

3) "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," $10.6M

4) "Sky High," $9M

5) "Must Love Dogs," $7.4M

6) "March of the Penguins," $6.9M

7) "Stealth," $5.8M

8) "Fantastic Four," $4.1M

9) "War of the Worlds," $3.6M

10) "The Island," $3.1M *AP*

Vision and ...

From page A28

"Metropolis."

The first was shown at the German film festival in the Glorietta some years ago. The second was presented last Thursday at SM Megamall, scored live by Rubber Inc., to open this year's fest.

This 1926 sci-fi romance became "one of the most enduring cult classics of the '80s," reported the British Film Institute magazine Sight and Sound—a status by no small means boosted by the likes of Freddie Mercury and Madonna, who looted the fantastical images for their music videos.

Behemoth

This monument of the silent era has been critiqued as "visionary in its scope and innovation yet childish in its treatment of political and romantic themes, a magical behemoth that still leaves contemporary film students shaking their heads in wonder."

The fest goes on throughout this month, the screenings scheduled at 8 p.m. Thursdays in Cinema 6 at SM Megamall.

Must-see

"Spies" will be screened Aug. 11 as scored by The Sammy Asuncion Group; "Dr. Mabuse the Gambler" (the first of the controversial cycle, inspired by Al Capone and foreshadowing the rise of Hitler) Aug. 18, by Tots Tolentino and Buhay; and "Destiny," Aug. 25, by Cynthia Alexander.

They are not yet available on bootleg video, so don't miss any of these precious cultural artifacts.

SHOW TIME

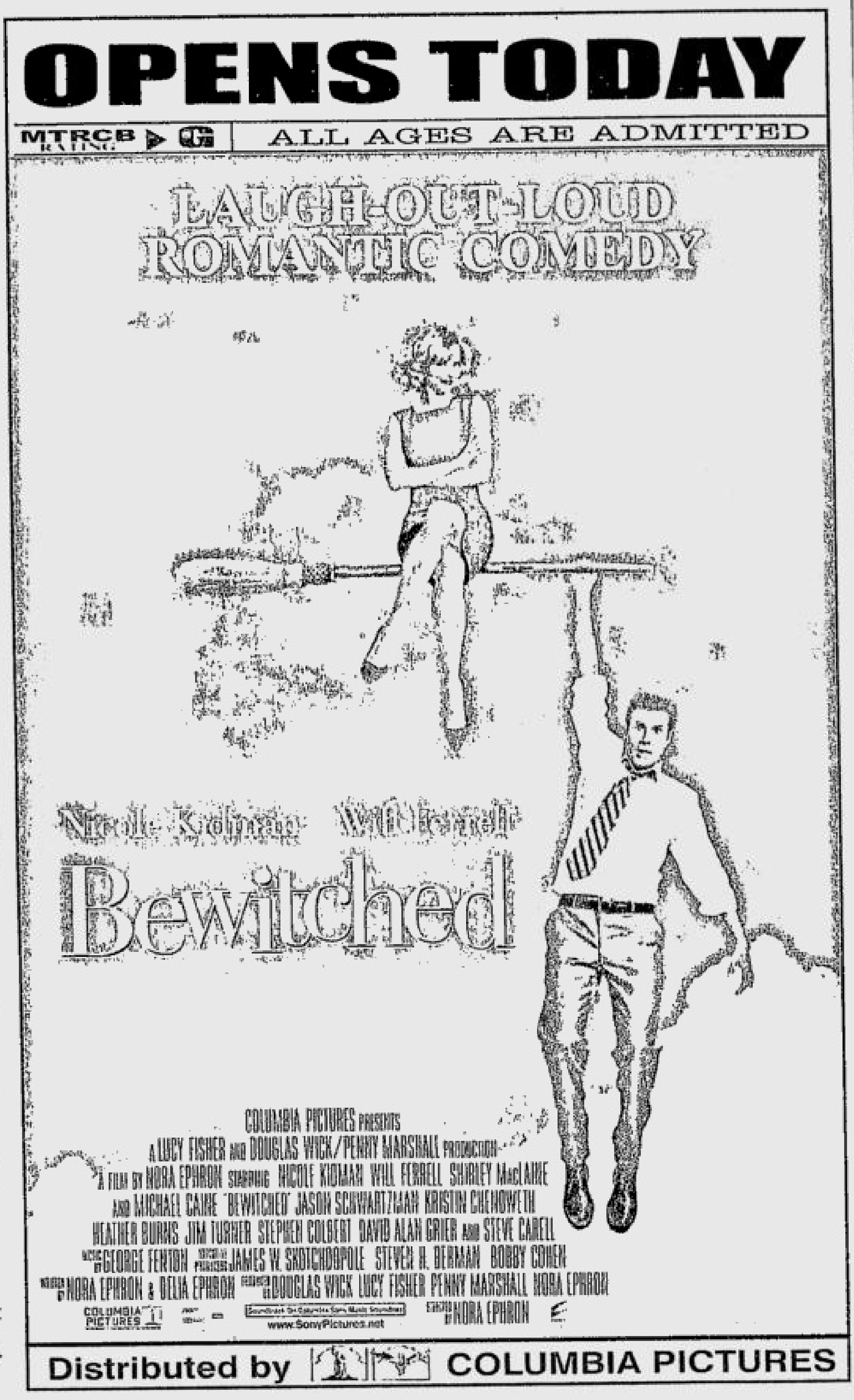
GERONIMO

Sarah's first

SARAH Geronimo takes on the Big Dome for her first major solo concert, "One Night Only," on Sept. 30. Her guests are Mark Bautista, Piolo Pascual and Japoy Lizardo.

'StarAct' series

THE CENTER for Pop Music Philippines holds a "Staract" series at the CCP Little Theater featuring its staff and select students: Agnes Lunar, Aug. 24; Angela Abejoro and Carem Lemence, Aug. 25; Kiko Curativo and Frank Manara, Aug. 26; Belle Crisolo, Aug. 30; and Milet Medino, Aug. 31. Call 7275239 or 4117310.



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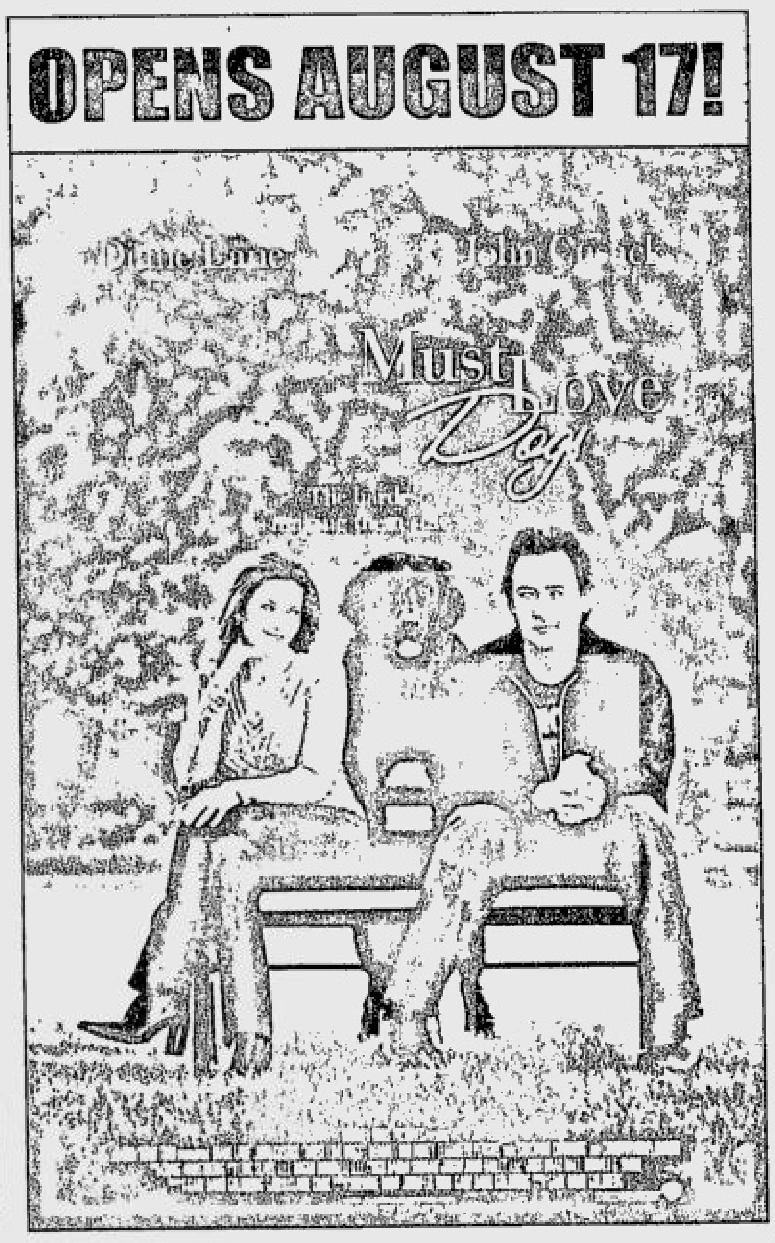

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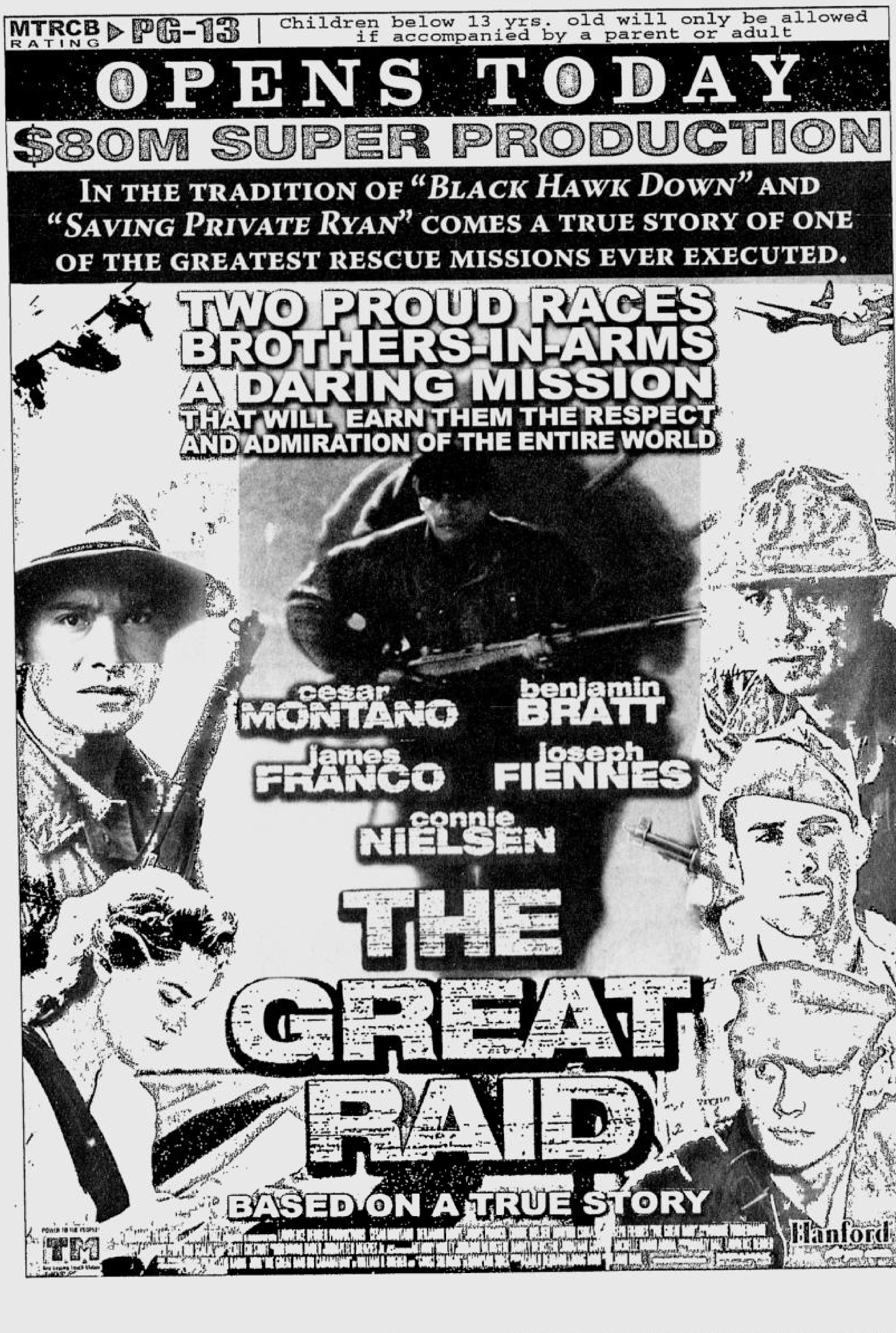
Diane Lane John Cusack
Must Love Dogs



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- Bonnie Laufer, TRIBUTE-TV (TORONTO)
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2 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY	7 STRAIGHT SHOT
3 STEALTH	8 D' ANOTHERS
4 WEDDING CRASHERS	9 THE ISLAND
5 THE GREAT RAID	10 BEWITCHED

ERMITA
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1 THE GREAT RAID	
2 YEAR OF THE YAO	5 BEWITCHED
3 THE ISLAND	6 CRASH
4 WEDDING CRASHERS	7 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

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3 STRAIGHT SHOT	7 BEWITCHED
4 THE GREAT RAID	8 D' ANOTHERS

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2 D' ANOTHERS
3 STEALTH
4 YEAR OF THE YAO

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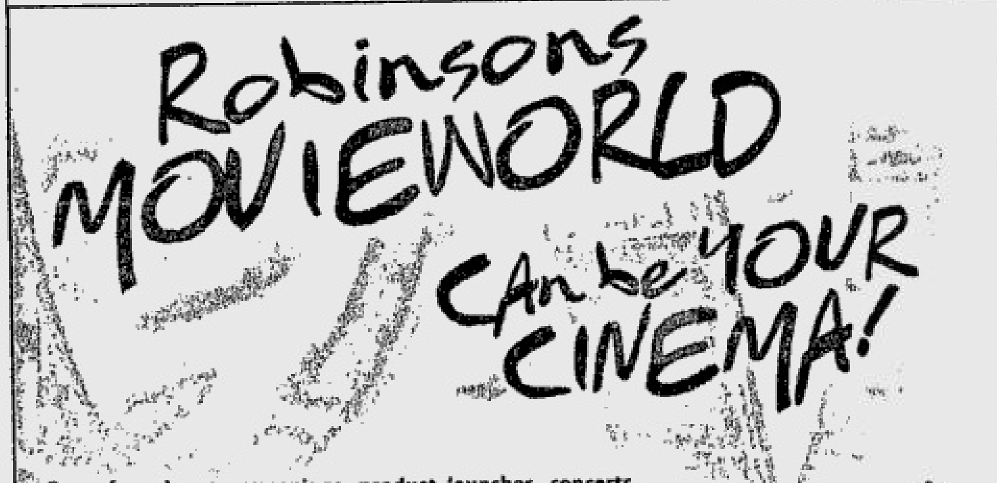
2 THE GREAT RAID
3 CRASH
4 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY



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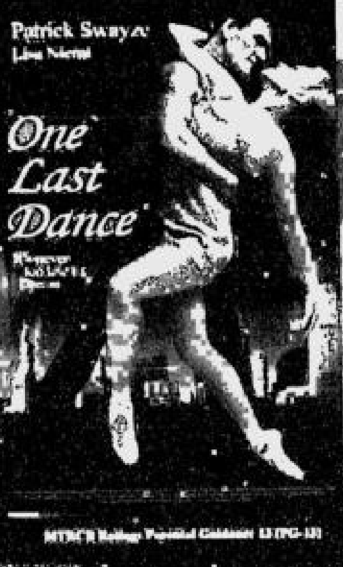

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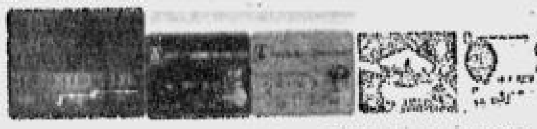

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-354, Series of 2005

Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: You have many suitors. Why, of all of them, did you decide to choose (name of singer) for your boyfriend?

Guest: Well, simply because he's a very nice!

(That's too simple for us. He's a very nice what—person? singer? kisser? cucumber? snugglebug?—what?)

* * *

Host: How can we keep our feet in good, healthy condition, especially now that it's already raining?

Guest: If your feet get wet, immediately wash and dry your feet. If not, *ang paa niyo, magiging alipunga!*

* * *

Host: You've had to deal with so many problems this year. How do you feel?

Guest: Despite everything, believe it or not, I've been happy with my life, never been happy!

(Uh, make up your mind?)

* * *

Host: There are also many scandalous rumors being spread about you—do you know who is doing this?

Guest: No, I don't know who is speeding the word around about me.

(*Ay*, speeding the word!)

* * *

Host: What is your secret for success that you can share with our viewers today?

Guest: Above all, you have to believe, then you have to give—and the rest, as they say, is a story!

(No, that's **not** what they say...)

* * *

Host: What about the new issue brought out recently against you?

Guest: What issue? I've already explained—

Host: Yes, you have, but will you explain this even if explain *mo na?*

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: Why did you include this man in the charges that you filed? Was he a part of the scam?

Guest: No, but he was trying to middle in the arrest?

(Sort of like a middleman, huh?)

* * *

Host: What can ordinary citizens do to help improve the country's difficult situation today?

Guest: The most important is not to do or say nothing. We have to express our opinion by writing to the newspapers, going into the radio!

(—Be careful not to get electrocuted!)

More should-see films on TV

TOMORROW, 7:15 p.m., Cinemax, "Music from Another Room." When a mother went into emergency labor, five-year-old Danny helped deliver his neighbor's baby, Anna Swan. Twenty-five years later, the grown-up Danny returns to his hometown to marry Anna. Stars **Jude Law** and **Gretchen Mol**.

Aug. 13, 2:55 p.m., Star Movies, "Hackers." High school takes on a new light when Dade meets a group of misfits and rich kids who hack into computer systems for fun. Stars **John Lee Miller, Angelina Jolie** and **Fisher Stevens.**

Aug. 14, 11:20 a.m., Star Movies, "Grosse Pointe Blank." Philosophical hitman Martin reluctantly accepts an assignment in Detroit, coinciding with his 10th-year high school reunion. Stars **John Cusack, Minnie Driver** and **Dan Akroyd.**

Aug. 14, 4:50 p.m., HBO, "Gattaca." "In-valid" Vincent Freeman dreams of a journey into space as a Gattaca Corp. navigator. To do this, he must assume a "Valid's" identity. Stars **Uma Thurman, Ethan Hawke** and **Jude Law.**

Aug. 15, 9 p.m., Cinemax, "Introducing Dorothy Dandridge." The celebrated singer sought to overcome color barriers in entertainment and society. Stars **Halle Berry, Brent Spiner** and **Klaus Maria Brandauer.**

Aug. 16, 7:05 p.m., HBO, "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers." The remaining members of the Fellowship pursue different paths. Stars **Elijah Wood, Viggo Mortensen, Ian McKellen, Orlando Bloom, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett** and **Miranda Otto.**

Aug. 16, 4:15 p.m., Cinemax, "Footloose." Teenager Ren McCormack moves from Chicago with his mom to a small midwestern town, which is under the sway of an authoritarian minister. Stars **Kevin Bacon, Lori Singer, John Lithgow, Chris Penn** and **Sarah Jessica Parker.**

Aug. 17, 5:15 p.m., Cinemax, "Billy Madison." Twenty-seven-year-old Billy agrees to repeat grades 1 through 12 in just 24 weeks to prove to his father that he deserves to be the heir to their billion-dollar hotel empire. Stars **Adam Sandler.**

Aug. 18, 11:45 a.m., HBO, "Little Nikita." Teenager Jeff Grant learns from an FBI agent that his parents are really deep-cover Soviet spies. Jeff struggles to cope with the secret that has turned his world upside-down. Stars **Sidney Poitier, River Phoenix** and **Richard Jenkins.**

'Finding Neverland'

JOHNNY Depp's recent starrer, "Finding Neverland," in which he portrays "Peter Pan" playwright **J.M. Barrie**, is now available on VCD and DVD formats at Astrovision, Odyssey and SM Record Bar outlets. The fantasy-drama also stars **Kate Winslet** as Sylvia Llewelyn Davies, Barrie's soulmate.

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2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY PLEASE CALL FOR SCREENING TIME GP
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BEWITCHED GP	STEALTH PG13	BEWITCHED GP

MTRCB RATING G General Audience ALL AGES ADMITTED

AMERICA FERRERA IS "CARMEN."
Sassy and outspoken yet deeply sensitive, fireball Carmen is hoping for quality time with her father, whom she's seen only briefly since her parents' divorce, Carmen is instead stunned to discover him happily living with a fiancé and two future stepchildren. Disappointed and suddenly out of place, she struggles with her feelings rather than risk losing him with a confrontation, until her emotions get the better of her and all hell breaks loose. She's the one who always says what the others are thinking or feeling and wish they could say.

She's also the writer and narrator of the story. Carmen is a combination of passion and introspection.

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OPENS AUGUST 24

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2 BEWITCHED 11:20FS/11:50MF/02:05/04:20/06:35 08:20LFS/09:00LMF/10:45END
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1 STEALTH 12:00FS/12 10MF/02 30/04 50/07:10 09:10LFS/09 30LMF/11 30END
2 THE ISLAND 12:00FS/12 10MF/02 30/04 50/07:10 09 25LFS/09 30LMF/11 45END
3 THE GREAT RAID 11 20FS/11 30MF/02 00/04 30/07 00 09.10LFS/09 30LMF/11 40END

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CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 THE ISLAND
BEWITCHED
6 STEALTH
WEDDING CRASHERS
CRASH
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
11 THE GREAT RAID
12 THE EYE INFINITY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 ARAHAN
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 WEDDING CRASHERS
4 THE ISLAND
5 THE GREAT RAID
6 D'ANOTHERS
7 STEALTH
8 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
9 BEWITCHED
10 THE EYE INFINITY
11 IF ONLY
12 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM NORTH EDSA
THE GREAT RAID
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
THE EYE INFINITY
D' ANOTHERS
5 WEDDING CRASHERS
6 THE ISLAND
STEALTH
8 BEWITCHED

SM CITY STA MESA
THE GREAT RAID
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
BEWITCHED
STEALTH
D' ANOTHERS
YEAR OF THE YAO
WEDDING CRASHERS
8 ARAHAN
9 THE ISLAND
10 CRASH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
THE GREAT RAID
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
STEALTH
4 BEWITCHED
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
CRASH
WEDDING CRASHERS
8 ARAHAN
D' ANOTHERS
10 THE EYE INFINITY

SM CITY MANILA
BEWITCHED
THE ISLAND
ARAHAN
4 THE GREAT RAID
5 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
6 STEALTH
7 YEAR OF THE YAO
8 IF ONLY
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 CRASH
11 WEDDING CRASHERS
12 THE EYE INFINITY

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 THE GREAT RAID
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 BEWITCHED
4 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
2 D' ANOTHERS
THE GREAT RAID
4 BEWITCHED

SM SAN LAZARO
1 THE GREAT RAID
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
3 CRASH
4 ARAHAN
5 BEWITCHED
D' ANOTHERS

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 STEALTH
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
3 WEDDING CRASHERS
4 ARAHAN
THE EYE INFINITY
6 D' ANOTHERS

SM CITY BACOOR
ARAHAN
2 CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
3 THE GREAT RAID
4 BEWITCHED
5 STEALTH
6 D' ANOTHERS
7 WEDDING CRASHERS
8 THE ISLAND

SM CITY DASMARINAS
CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
D' ANOTHERS
YEAR OF THE YAO
4 WEDDING CRASHERS

SM CITY LUCENA
NEW POLICE STORY
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
CRASH

SM CITY BAGUIO
STEALTH
2 D' ANOTHERS
IF ONY
4 THE MACHINIST

SM CITY MARILAO
1 IF ONLY
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 EVIL DEAD
4 ARAHAN

SM CITY BATANGAS
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 STEALTH
4 EVIL DEAD

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STEALTH
2 THE ISLAND
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2005

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

Text us your feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

OPENING TODAY

The Great Raid

Directed by John Dahl
Stars Joseph Fiennes, Benjamin Bratt, James Franco, Cesar Montano

Nick Schager wrote in Slant magazine: "While one can imagine John Wayne starring in such a square, against-all-odds military movie, it's difficult to accept most of Dahl's miscast performers in their respective roles, whether it be Joseph Fiennes as twitchy malaria-suffering captive Major Gibson, Benjamin Bratt occasionally lapsing into a Southern 'hoo-ah!' marine patois as ranger Lt. Colonel Mucci, or baby-faced James Franco as the captain charged with drawing up the smash-and-grab rescue plan ... the most memorable sights in this stodgy film aren't the real-life visages of WWII heroes being welcomed home after years of POW hell but, rather, the sight of Filipino captain Juan Pajota [played by Cesar Montano]—after successfully aiding Mucci's campaign against the hated, racist Japanese—giving a laughable 'job well done' bow to his fellow indigenous comrades before disappearing into the exotic landscape from whence he came."

Bewitched

Directed by Nora Ephron
Stars Nicole Kidman, Will Ferrell, Michael Caine, Shirley MacLaine

Roger Ebert wrote in Chicago Sun Times on June 24: "There is not a movie here. Just scenes in search of one. The joke is this: Jack, [played by Will Ferrell], is a movie star whose career has hit bottom. Sales of his last DVD: zero. In desperation, he turns to television and finds himself considered for a starring role in a revival of 'Bewitched.' He will play the Darrin role... He doesn't realize, oh, delicious irony, is that Isabel, [played by Nicole Kidman], is in fact a real witch ... and indeed has a lot of trouble giving up witchcraft. It's so tempting to charge your purchases on a tarot card."

No ties with Dolphy

But Zsa Zsa's daughter Karylle says that's really okay

By Nini Valera

BOND with mom is "going strong."

IN "Coz I Love You," Karylle sings of her pain, and love for her mother, Zsa Zsa Padilla.

"I wrote the song after a family healing session," Karylle told INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview.

The song is included in her latest album, "You Make Me Sing" (Universal Records).

"(My parents') separation was really hard on me," Karylle said. "I couldn't talk about it [at first]. But after the healing sessions... I was okay. I wrote the song to let people know that despite everything, I still love her (Zsa Zsa)."

As for Dolphy, the man her mother had been living with for the longest time, Karylle said, "I won't lie about it. I don't have a relationship with him. Nothing good or bad. I'm just neutral. Of course, we say 'hi.'"

She said her relationship with Zsa Zsa was going strong. "It's just that there are some things... if you hear the song, you'll understand."

Closure

The rift is given closure in the song, which talks of acceptance, forgiveness and understanding.

"It's hard to talk about family healing," Karylle said. "But I've learned that it's okay to [do so]."

Karylle lives with her father, Dr. Modesto Tatlonghari, but she said she had a bond with Zsa Zsa that allowed them to stay close.

As an artist, however, she'd rather set herself apart from her mother, an OPM icon in the 1980s.

She explained, "Most artists in the United States write their own material—Alicia Keys, Usher... I think that's the way to go."

Karylle writes her songs in her head and asks a friend, like Noel Mendez, to play it on the guitar. "Then he writes down the notes," she said.

Karylle considers her music career as her main job, and acting as a weekend sideline. She is a regular in GMA 7's *fantaserye*, "Encantadia."

This second album is the biggest thing for her right now. "It took me quite a while to come out with it because I personally chose the songs," she said. "I'm happy about it. And I'm happy about myself."

Vision and visuals from the Master of Darkness

By Constantino C. Tejero

IT'S a heroic job the people of Goethe Institut are doing in bringing the silents to a new generation of moviegoers. The more heroic it becomes when one considers these are undisputed masterpieces of the German silent cinema they are offering.

If ever a silent movie clicks with a young audience, it must be the Three Stooges, right?

But the German Expressionist films known for their bleakness and mystical quality?

Wonder of wonders, at the festival called Movies Live held at SM Megamall last year, Filipino moviegoers lapped up F.W. Murnau, one of the giants of cinema, silent or talky.

Mall rats were treated to a sumptuous offering of authentic masterpieces ranging from "Faust—A German Folk Tale" to "The Last Laugh," and culminating in a very rare screening of "Nosferatu, A Symphony of Terror" (the father of all Dracula movies).

That screening was jampacked by mostly young moviegoers, in spite of a brewing supertyphoon. How did that happen?

Pure cinema

First, admission was free.

Second, there must be a new audience out there hungering to see such pure cinema on the widescreen.

Third, the festival organizers were wise enough to have the silent movies scored live by some of our more progressive musicians, thus building a bridge to a younger audience.

This year's fest could likewise succeed. "Movies Live" is featuring the silent masterpieces of Fritz Lang, no less, specifically the German films he made before moving to Hollywood in the early '30s.

The Austrian-born Lang, dubbed Master of Darkness, is one of the few genuine film masters. He and Hitchcock were regarded by Cahiers du Cinéma critics in the '60s as the twin paragons of their ideal of pure cinema.

But while Hitchcock is perennially rediscovered by cinéastes, Lang's reputation has been sinking in recent years, kept afloat only by two films: "M" and

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Scattershot magic

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

JUST when it seems we've seen all the old ideas recycled by Hollywood, we encounter an oddity like "Bewitched." It's not a remake of the popular sitcom, but a strange and bewildering take on contemporary characters attempting to recreate the 1960s TV series. This movie, helmed by Nora Ephron ("Sleepless in Seattle") and co-written by Delia Ephron ("You've Got Mail") had originality going for it.

Sadly, the premise didn't translate too well.

The movie is largely a parody of the harsh realities of show biz, particularly the struggles of has-been actor Jack Wyatt (Will Ferrell), who tries to revive his long-dead career. He casts the unknown Isabel (Nicole Kidman) as his co-star in the new series about a nose-twitching witch. Unknown to everyone, she really is a witch! It seems refreshing at first, but we discover soon enough that the movie isn't a retooled-for-the-big-screen version.

KIDMAN is adorable, but ...

Puzzling accent

Again, let me emphasize that while these ideas are fresh for a non-remake, the magic gets scattershot from there. We're just actually supposed to believe that Isabel left her witch coven to pursue a magic-free existence in the suburbs. We're puzzled, too, that her wizard dad (Michael Caine) has an English accent and she doesn't.

Ferrell as a self-centered goofball is enjoyable, as always. Kidman is cute and adorable as the make-believe desperate housewitch. Shirley Maclaine is underutilized as an actress portraying a witch, which she also is, like Isabel. The other characters are depthless and unnecessary.

The dialogue is extra-witty in some parts and simply unfunny in others. Overall, "Bewitched" leaves you feeling hexed.

ROUNDUP

Superstars for Watergate film

LOS ANGELES—Superstars Meryl Streep, Gwyneth Paltrow and Annette Bening will star in a new movie about the Watergate scandal that toppled ex-US president Richard Nixon, the industry press said Monday.

Streep, 56, who has won two Oscars and been nominated for a record 13, will play Martha Mitchell, the whistle-blowing wife of former US attorney general John Mitchell, in a celluloid version of John Jeter's play "Dirty Tricks."

The film will be produced for Hollywood's Paramount Pictures by Brad Pitt and Dede Gardner of Plan B Productions, Daily Variety said.

Bening will play United Press International White House correspondent Helen Thomas, while Paltrow with take on the role of Maureen Dean, wife of White House counsel John Dean.

Jill Clayburgh will play the president's wife, Pat Nixon.

AFP

Cascades due back in Manila

THE CASCADES

THE CASCADES are due back in the country next month for two concerts, after their successful shows in April at the Araneta Coliseum, Hard Rock Café and Waterfront Hotel in Cebu. This time around, they will perform again at the Big Dome on Sept. 9, and at the Manila Hotel on Sept. 10.

BUSINESS

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Oil surges to new high; tops $64/barrel

ADB sees slower East Asian growth

RECORD-HIGH oil prices, slower exports and lower growth in regional powerhouses China and Singapore are expected to reduce East Asia's economic growth rate to 6.8 percent this year from 7.6 percent in 2004, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday.

It said China's economic growth is likely to slow to 8.9 percent from 9.5 percent last year, and Singapore is expected to be among the economies hardest hit by weaker export prospects.

Singapore's growth will likely fall to 3.7 percent this year from 8.4 percent in 2004, the ADB said.

The East Asian economies include the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China and South Korea.

"We now face a backdrop of moderately slowing growth, a gradual buildup of inflationary pressures, and a tightening of US monetary policy," said Pradumna B. Rana, senior director of ADB's Office of Regional Integration.

"The key challenge for East Asia is to calibrate fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies while at the same time pursuing structural reforms to strengthen domestic demand," he said.

The report said the forecasts were subject to risks posed by a further rise in oil prices. It cited the loss of economic momentum in major industrial mar-

ADB/ B4

Markets watching Saudi Arabia, Iran

OIL BLIPPED above $64 a barrel to another record high yesterday as traders factored in the potential for Middle East supply disruptions that could add strain to a market already struggling with refinery glitches.

In Saudi Arabia, the world's top exporter, US missions remained shut for a second day and Britain said militants were in the "final stages" of planning attacks, while the U.N. nuclear watchdog prepared to discuss Iran's resumption of nuclear work.

US light sweet crude soared past Monday's record high in early electronic trade in Singapore yesterday, hitting a new peak of $64.27 a barrel, 48 percent higher than the start of the year. London Brent crude was up 10 cents at $62.80.

"The key issue now is the geopolitical risk," said Dariusz Kowalczyk, senior investment strategist at CFC Securities Ltd. in Hong Kong.

"Because spare capacity is so low, any threat to supply makes the market very nervous, either on the crude side or refined products side," he added.

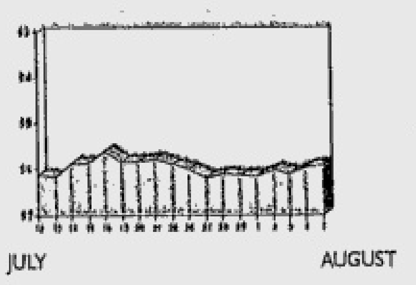
After rallying since late-July on a series of US refinery outages that threaten to tighten fuel supplies, prices soared this week as Middle East security fears come back to the fore.

Britain on Monday cited "credible reports" of an attack in Saudi Arabia, which is battling a two-year campaign of violence by supporters of al-Qaida leader Osama

OIL/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

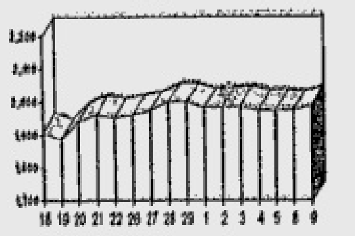
₱55.875 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 9, 2005

¥111.76 = $1
As of 3 p.m., Aug. 9, 2005

GOLD: $437.70-438.20
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 5, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Telecoms, SM lead market higher



SHARE prices rose yesterday, boosted by demand in blue chips including SM Prime, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Globe Telecom.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 15.17 points, or 0.8 percent, at 1,990, after shedding 0.04 percent Monday, traders said.

SM Prime, the nation's largest mall operator, gained 2.8 percent to close at P7.30, with investors buying the stock ahead of the release of its second-quarter earnings report.

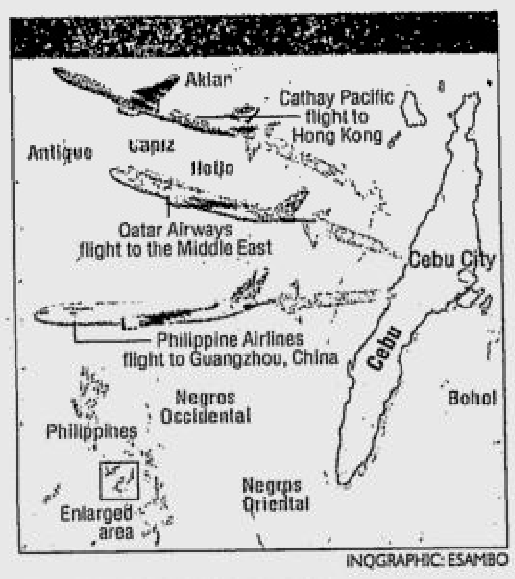
PLDT was up 0.6 percent at P1,630 on expectations the country's largest telecommunications group can sustain its strong earnings performance for the rest of the year despite the industry's slowing growth in cellular subscribers.

Its rival Globe rose 1.3 percent to P810, as investors bet on the mobile phone service provider sustaining its revenue performance.

"Corporate earnings have generally been strong despite the (political) crisis that started in the second quarter, so investors may just be accumulating stocks," said BPI Securities senior manager Roberto Cano. "But investors are not really aggressively buying up stocks. The market is still within a consolidation phase."

Cano said investors may continue to wait ahead of the Supreme Court ruling on amendments to the value-added tax law. The court suspended the amendments last month after the opposition questioned their constitutionality.

More carriers to use Cebu airport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Cathay Pacific flight to Hong Kong
Antique
Capiz
Iloilo
Qatar Airways flight to the Middle East
Cebu City
Philippine Airlines flight to Guangzhou, China
Cebu
Bohol
Negros Occidental
Philippines
Enlarged area
Negros Oriental

INQGRAPHIC: ESAMBO

By Clarissa S. Batino

HONG KONG carrier Cathay Pacific will double its flights to twice a day to and from the Mactan International Airport starting Oct. 1 in anticipation of increased volume going to the Crown Colony once the Disney theme park opens in the Chinese territory next month.

Philippine Airlines and Qatar Airways would also introduce new flights from Cebu by the fourth quarter of the year, according to Mactan Airport general manager Adelberto Yap.

PAL will launch a direct flight to Guangzhou, China, by the fourth quarter while Qatar will increase its flights to twice daily to and from Cebu.

"Qatar is the only airline servicing the Middle East route direct from Cebu and has a monopoly of the overseas workers from the Visayas and Mindanao," Yap said in an interview.

By the middle of the month, South Phoenix Airlines is scheduled to mount flights from Malaysia to Cebu, according to Yap. The low-cost carrier is a joint venture of Malaysian and Filipino investors.

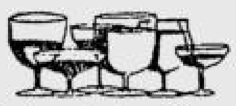
South Phoenix currently flies to Sandakan and Zamboanga. Cargo carrier Trans Global Air lines will also start carrying goods from Asia, primarily China, through the Cebu hub by Aug. 22.

Last month, Asiana Airlines started its four-times-a-week flights from Incheon to Cebu while Korean Airlines began its Pusan (Korea)-to-Cebu trips last Aug. 1.

Yap said the Mactan Airport had completed

MORE/ B4

WHAT'S INSIDE



Priced-to-Go /B3
Teves seeks end to dispute in PNB /B2

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MEETING SET THURSDAY

Teves seeks end to dispute in PNB

By Doris C. Dumlao

FINANCE Secretary Gary Teves has scheduled a make or break meeting tomorrow among aggrieved sugar planters, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and Philippine National Bank to settle the dispute over P3 billion in sugar crop loans ahead of the bank's privatization.

The meeting comes just a day before the much-anticipated bidding for the 67- percent stake in PNB, which the government had vowed to push through.

It aims to address the sugar planters' concerns over their debts that the BSP took out of PNB as part of a dacion en pago (payment in kind) arrangement in 1994.

Asked yesterday whether he was optimistic that the matter would be laid to rest tomorrow, Teves said: "We'll try our best."

In an interview yesterday, Daniel Hagad, legal counsel for "Planters Against the Plunder of the Sugar Industry (Papsi)," said the group had a number of settlement options to present to the BSP and PNB that would allow sugar planters to share in the payable loans and give them a chance to free up mortgaged property.

"The BSP must consider not only saving PNB, but at the very least, give the same opportunity to the sugar planters who were plundered," Hagad said.

He said the planters must be allowed to buy back the loans at the same value the BSP offered to PNB.

He said these loans were actually still under court litigation and should not even be acted on pending court resolution.

One option, Hagad said, would be to allow the planters to take out the loans through a special purpose vehicle or a bond float.

The loans under dispute are agricultural sugar crop loans granted by the defunct Republic Planters Bank in the 1980s.

In 1991, RPB was privatized and became a PNB subsidiary known as PNB-RB. In 1998, PNB-RB was sold to Maybank and PNB assumed jurisdiction over the sugar loans.

PNB today acts as the collecting agent of the P3 billion in obligations that the BSP acquired through the dacion en pago.

As collecting agent, PNB was tasked by BSP to collect from the sugar industry borrowers and immediately remit all its collections to BSP, which placed the money in an escrow fund that was supposed to settle the BSP loan as soon when the fund hits P3 billion.

Papsi earlier asked Teves to postpone the Aug. 12 bidding for the PNB stake, citing the "anomalous" and "grossly disadvantageous" deals allowing the bank to buy back by 2013 over 4,000 secured loans to sugar farmers earlier surrendered to the BSP.

The PNB auction on Friday is the biggest privatization initiative by the government since 1997, when it sold to Hong Kong's First Pacific group the right to develop the sprawling Fort Bonifacio mili-

TEVES/ B3

Nokia sees sustained growth in RP

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GROWTH of the Philippine market for mobile phones may slow once half of the Filipino population gets at least one phone, according to Nokia Philippines.

However, Nokia Philippines country manager Parikshit Bhasin said the growing percentage of old-model handsets had given birth to a replacement market that is driving sales of mobile phones in the Philippines.

"A lot of growth is still happening in this market. The trend is now moving toward an upgrade of handsets," Bhasin said in a briefing yesterday.

Bhasin admitted the growth in the Philippine market "may not be as rapid nor as deep as before," especially once the penetration rate hits 50 percent of the population.

As of June, close to 36 million Filipinos have become wireless phone subscribers, corresponding to a penetration rate of 43 percent.

But opportunities for expansion, he said, still abound, especially for Nokia, which has remained the market leader in the Philippines.

Worldwide, the Finnish phone maker holds 33 percent of the market.

The Nokia executive said the rate of replacement of handsets in the Philippines had shortened from the previous average of 36-48 months.

Consumers, he said, naturally wanted to upgrade their phones—from black and white to color screens, basic phones to units with cameras and music capabilities.

Because of this trend, almost all the new phones that Nokia will launch in the local market will have cameras.

These include the 6030, 6101, 6111 and 6270 models.

By next year, the new 3G phones, called the N series, will be available.

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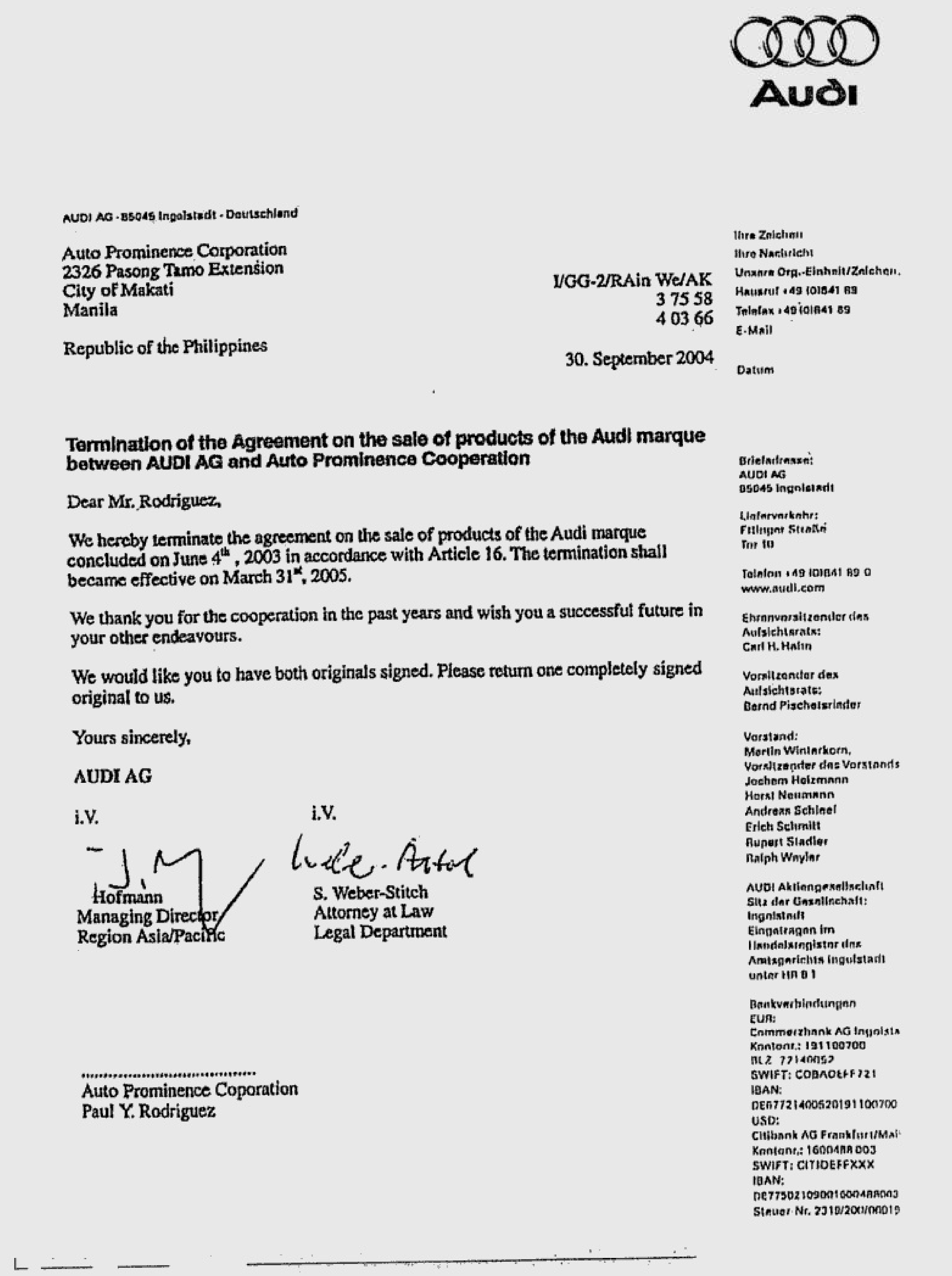

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Termination of the Agreement on the sale of products of the Audi marque between AUDI AG and Auto Prominence Cooperation

Dear Mr. Rodriguez,

We hereby terminate the agreement on the sale of products of the Audi marque concluded on June 4th, 2003 in accordance with Article 16. The termination shall became effective on March 31st, 2005.

We thank you for the cooperation in the past years and wish you a successful future in your other endeavours.

We would like you to have both originals signed. Please return one completely signed original to us.

Yours sincerely,

AUDI AG

i.V.
Hofmann
Managing Director
Region Asia/Pacific

i.V.
S. Weber-Stitch
Attorney at Law
Legal Department

....
Auto Prominence Coporation
Paul Y. Rodriguez

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 9, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	32	31.5	32	1,189,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49.5	49	49.5	1,075,600
China Banking Corp.	780	780	780	780	3,880
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.69	0.61	0.69	24,740,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	53.5	53.5	53	53	209,900
International Exch. Bank	19	19	19	19	58,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	28	27	27.5	513,200
Philippine National Bank	47	47	46.5	46.5	37,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.25	16.25	14.25	16.25	446,700
Security Bank Corp.	33.5	34.5	33	34.5	329,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	32	32	32	32	17,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.75	0.75	30,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	260	260	260	260	1,030
Manulife Financial Corp.	2770	2800	2770	2800	40
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	330,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2000	2010	2000	2000	800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	7,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	2,925,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	825	805	810	9,610
Ipeople Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	2,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.06	12,700,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	18,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.95	3.15	2.95	3.1	12,795,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1630	1635	1630	1630	37,300
Ivantage Corp.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	9,600,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15	14.75	15	9,400
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	25	24.75	25	160,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.7	2,822,000
Petron Corp.	3.25	3.4	3.25	3.3	5,784,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	500,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	438,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.04	1.18	1.04	1.04	68,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	710,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3	3.05	3	3.05	435,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	40,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	30,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	215,300
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	600,000
Swift Food, Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	30,000
San Miguel Corp. A	69	69.5	68.5	69.5	135,600
San Miguel Corp. B	99.5	99.5	99	99.5	169,500
Universal Robina Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	18,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	3,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	1,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	307.5	310	305	310	188,800
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.58	3,110,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	206,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	5,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.98	2.02	1.98	2.02	770,000
APC Group Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	310,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	48,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	130,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	25,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	6,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	150,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	1,475,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	10,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.205	780,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	460,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.1	4,033,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	106,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	371,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43.5	44	43	44	856,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.3	41,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.45	3.5	3.45	3.5	220,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.84	1.8	1.84	110,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.34	1.4	1.34	1.38	3,012,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	14,730,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.195	0.21	1,790,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	860,000
SM Investments Corp.	225	239	225	239	979,770
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	20,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	400,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	10,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2	2	2	2	7,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.6	1.62	1.6	1.6	185,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.94	0.96	0.94	0.96	5,810,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	1,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.36	692,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	86,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,200
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	232,000
Far Eastern University	510	510	510	510	4,540
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.1	3,978,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.92	0.9	0.92	470,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	290,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	5,130,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	2,290,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	4,795,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.52	69,000
SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	2,275,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc.B	0.91	0.94	0.9	0.9	297,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	37,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	59,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.3	7.8	7.3	7.8	16,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.06	2,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.33	1,220,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	7,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.005	0.006	136,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	50,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	1,030,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	29	29	28.5	28.5	104,500
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	335,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	105,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	3,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.05	3.05	55,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	2,470,000

DISCLOSURES

GINEBRA San Miguel Inc. will hold a briefing on the company's 2005 First-half results on Aug. 11, 3 p.m. at the Executive Dining Floor, 2/F SMC Head Office Complex, No. 40 San Miguel Ave., Mandaluyong City.

***

PRUDENTIAL Bank disclosed the change in shareholdings of Augusto S. Estrada on Aug. 4. The total number of shares disposed is 178,297, and the total number of shares owned is 0.

***

CHINATRUST (Phils.) Commercial Bank Corp. disclosed the resignation of Atty. Maritess Parilla-Elbinias as secretary of the company, effective Aug. 8.

***

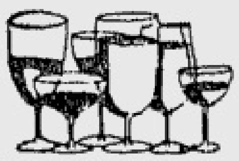
ELECTED directors of **Equitable PCI Bank** were Corazon S. De La Paz, Ramon J. Jabar, Fulgencio S. Factoran Jr., Ma. Luz C. Generoso, Nazario Cabuquit Jr., Winston F. Garcia, Reynaldo P. Palmiery, Antonio L. Go, John C.B. Go, Peter Go Pallan, Genevieve W.J. Go, Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Rene J. Buenaventura, Anthony M. Te and Jesus G. Tirona.

Compiled by Erika A. Sarmiento, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

August 9, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.809520	1.000000	55.9880
Japan	Yen	0.007217	0.008915	0.4991
United Kingdom	Pound	1.444588	1.784500	99.9106
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104169	0.128680	7.2045
Switzerland	Franc	0.642017	0.793084	44.4032
Canada	Dollar	0.666491	0.823316	46.0958
Singapore	Dollar	0.489284	0.604412	33.8398
Australia	Dollar	0.619515	0.765287	42.8469
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.147325	2.652590	148.5132
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215867	0.266660	14.9298
Brunei	Dollar	0.487809	0.602591	33.7379
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019672	0.024301	1.3606
UAE	Dirham	0.220403	0.272264	15.2435
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.235300	69.1620
Argentina	Peso	0.282309	0.348736	19.5250
Brazil	Real	0.349458	0.431686	24.1692
Denmark	Kroner	0.134053	0.1655936	9.2714
India	Rupee	0.018627	0.023010	1.2883
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216039	0.266873	14.9417
Mexico	New Peso	0.076029	0.093919	5.2583
New Zealand	Dollar	0.560765	0.692713	38.7836
South Africa	Rand	0.125725	0.155308	8.6954
Korea	Won	0.000797	0.000984	0.0551
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025425	0.031407	1.7584

Priced-to-Go



COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE FILIPINO shareholders who are in the process of buying out their American partners in the PriceSmart warehouse chain are being allowed up to a year to retain the same store name.

According to the grapevine, PriceSmart chair William Go has rounded up a group of partners to take 90-percent control of the Philippine operations of the San Diego (California)-based membership club, with Metrobank deciding to retain its 10-percent stake.

With the Americans leaving the retail scene —PriceSmart was the first foreign firm to take advantage of the Retail Trade Liberalization Law—Go and company will henceforth be free to source their importations elsewhere, instead of coursing them through the PriceSmart parent.

Go expressed surprise that the supposed hush-hush details of the out-of-court settlement were published in several papers yesterday. The San Diego headquarters has given the Filipinos until Aug. 20 to sign the settlement papers.

With the negotiations still very much underway, the Go group has not had time to figure a new name for the four-store chain. A few tentative recommendations: Smart Price Club, Smarter Price Club, Smart Savers Club, Go Smart Club.

Anyone who submits a winning entry will receive a basket of goods, plus a spin around the Asian Institute of Management in Go's now famous yellow Murcielago.

Leaking lawyers, libelous lapses

COCKTALES thanks Accralaw for the undeserved attention that the blue-chip law firm bestowed on yours truly in entirely devoting their latest weekly column—normally reserved for dissecting Supreme Court decisions, not mischievous columnists—in another paper.

"The article of Mr. Agustin is symptomatic of the deplorable practices of certain elements of Philippine media today: irresponsible, mercenary and just plain dirty," thundered Accralaw partner Rogelio Vinluan, referring to our Friday column.

Vinluan even titled his column, "A writer in the dock: The debasement of the journalistic profession."

Strange comments, since Vinluan himself years ago leaked us a copy of a Supreme Court decision to snipe at the justices for reversing

COCKTALES/ B4

Teves seeks end to dispute in PNB

From page B2

tary camp in Taguig.

The floor price was set at P43 a share.

Given the potential windfall from the sugar loan portfolio which the bank could not book as assets, Papsi said the floor price for PNB for the privatization was undervalued.

PNB, for its part, clarified that the floor price was based on a proper valuation done by independent financial adviser, ING Bank.

But Papsi warned that whoever would end up with the controlling stake in PNB— possibly taipan Lucio Tan who has the right to match the best bid—would get "scandalous" benefits from these loans at the expense of the battered sugar industry.

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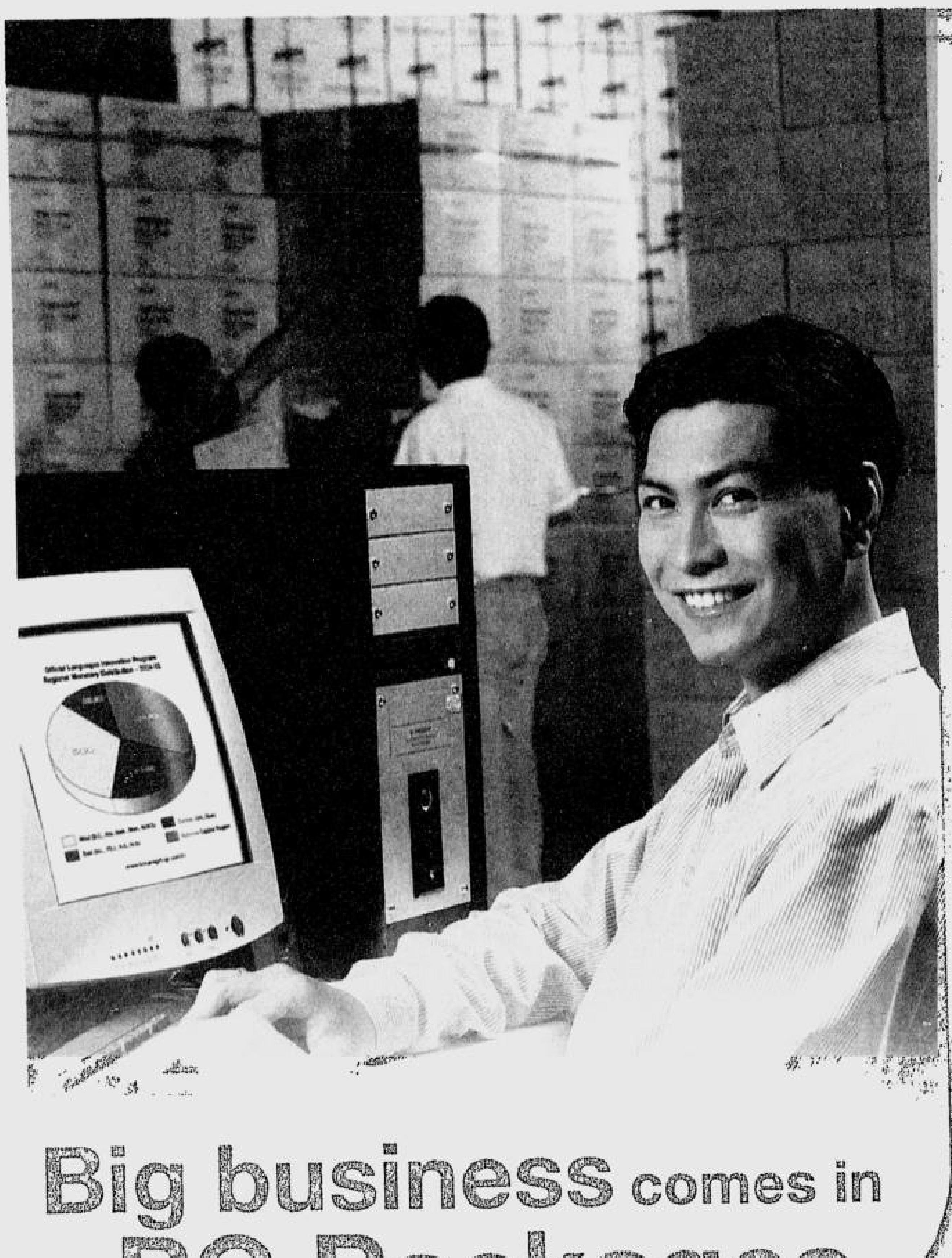

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For more details please call 672-2724

Mindanao power grid seen to be on brink of crisis

By Abigail L. Ho

THE MINDANAO grid is said to be teetering on the edge of a power crisis and no help is forthcoming in the near future.

Already, the energy sector on the island is experiencing power shortfalls and no additional capacity is expected to go on stream until 2007, with the completion of a 200-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plant in Misamis Oriental now under construction.

House committee on energy chair and Lanao del Norte Rep. Alipio Cirilo Badelles said that there were times when the grid would use up all its reserves due to severe lack of capacity.

The power shortage will be more keenly felt on the southern part of the main grid rather than on the northern part due to the presence of high-growth and high-demand areas such as General Santos City and Davao, Badelles said.

Ironically, all the power plants on the island are located on the northern side.

He said that the island's sole hope now rests with the coal plant still being constructed as there are no other committed projects in the pipeline.

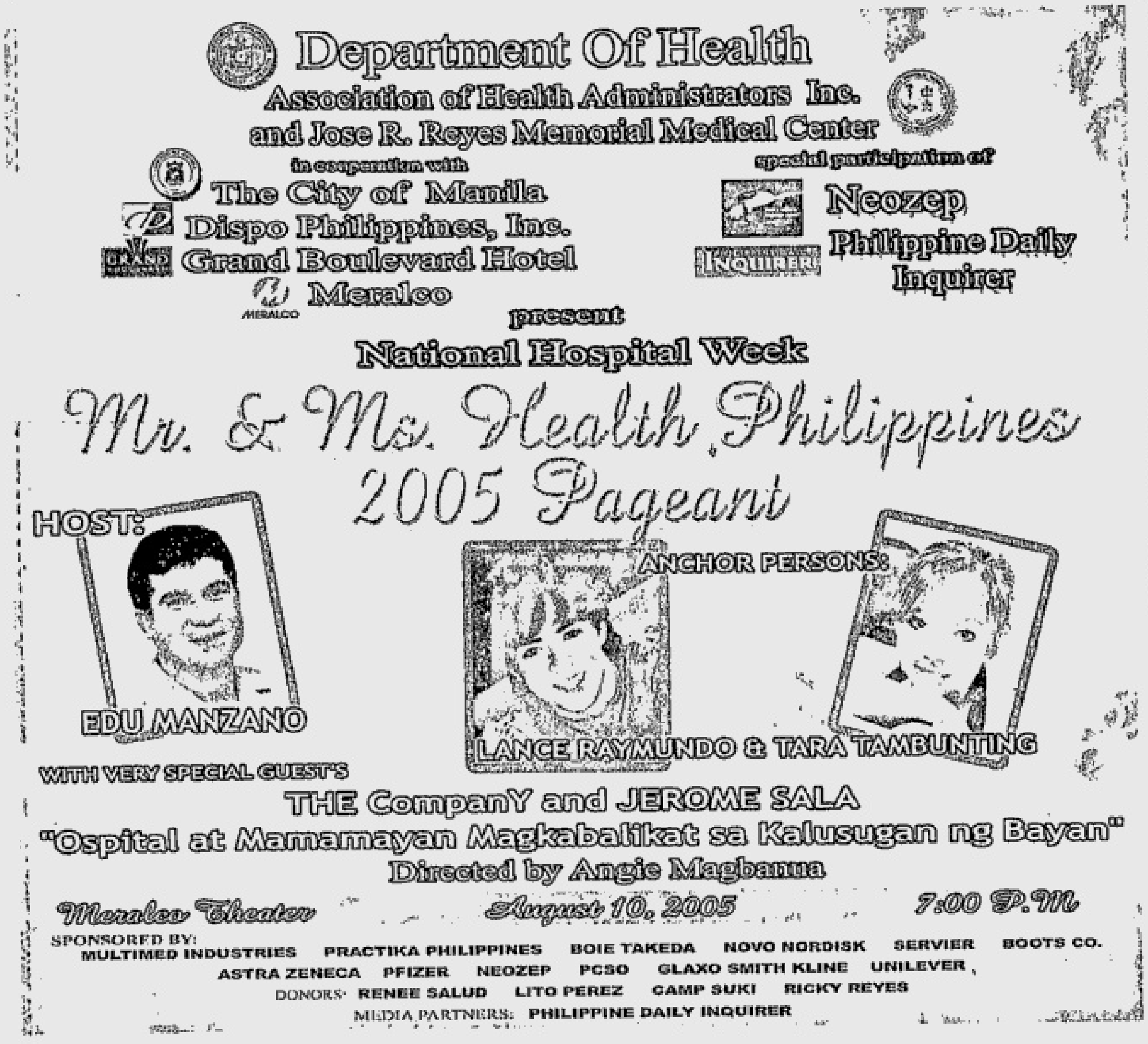
"All other projects are just indicative," Badelles said.

According to the Department of Energy's Philippine Energy Plan (PEP) for 2005 to 2014, the Mindanao grid needed 850 MW in indicative capacity, composed of a 600-MW baseload capacity and a 250-MW peaking capacity, to respond to the foreseen demand growth in the region.

"There is also an urgent need to install a 150-MW peaking plant to sustain the reliable power supply in the region in the near term," the PEP said.

Among the indicative capacity additions for the Mindanao grid are the 200-MW Sultan Kudarat coal-fired plant, the 68-MW Tagoloan hydropower project and the 50-MW Mt. Apo geothermal expansion project.

Mindanao needs some P77.6 billion in new capital from 2005 to 2014 to prevent a crisis, particularly during the summer months.



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SCHEDULE OF SEMINARS, PRESENTATIONS & ACTIVITIES

August 11, 2005 (Thurs.)
12:00pm - 1:00pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
1:00pm - 1:45pm Swarovski Crystal Architecture in the Philippines
1:00pm - 2:00pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
1:00pm - 6:00pm Real Screening
2:00pm - 2:45pm MYOB Accounting Seminar
2:00pm - 2:45pm Business Opportunity Program
2:00pm - 3:00pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
2:00pm - 3:00pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
3:00pm - 3:45pm Communicate in Color
3:00pm - 3:45pm ALTO Professional Audio Products
4:00pm - 4:45pm Opening Ceremony
5:00pm - 6:00pm Mini-concert by Joint Venture
6:00pm - 7:00pm Moving Heads Shootout / Powered-Speaker

August 12, 2005 (Fri.)
12:00pm - 1:00pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
1:00pm - 1:45pm LCD & LED Displays Importance in Making a Sale
1:00pm - 1:45pm JTS Instrument Microphones
2:00pm - 2:45pm Bio Active Diesel Enhancer for Clean Air
2:00pm - 2:45pm Outclassing the Competition Part 2 Image Enhancement Program by Mr. Clarence Mata (by registration only)
3:00pm - 3:45pm Closing Multi-Million Sales Through Impressive Presentation by Mr. Meinard Peñaloza (by registration only)
3:00pm - 3:45pm The Starbill Roving Billboard System featuring Dong Feng Automotive Co Ltd.
3:45pm - 4:30pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
4:00pm - 5:00pm DJ Mixing Exhibition
4:45pm - 5:30pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
5:00pm - 6:00pm Let's Groove Past Present & Future
6:00pm - 7:30pm Professional Sound System for Different Applications

August 13, 2005 (Sat.)
11:30pm - 12:15pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
12:15pm - 1:00pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
1:00pm - 1:45pm More Than Yellow, More Than Just Pages
1:00pm - 1:45pm AVIOM Distributed Audio Network "Digital Snake Cables & Personal Monitoring Systems"
1:00pm - 1:45pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
1:45pm - 2:15pm Moving Heads Shootout
2:15pm - 3:00pm Toshiba Vision of the Future
2:15pm - 3:00pm Product Presentation
3:00pm - 3:45pm Add Life to Your Presentation
3:00pm - 3:45pm MP Turbo presents The Ultimate Speed Fest Championship & Racing School
4:00pm - 4:45pm Fashion in the Techno World
4:45pm - 5:30pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
5:00pm - 7:30pm "Microdata 20th Jam"
6:30pm - 7:30pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo

August 14, 2005 (Sun.)
11:30pm - 12:30pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
12:30pm - 1:30pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
1:00pm - 1:45pm Business Opportunity Program
1:30pm - 2:30pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo
1:30pm - 2:15pm Napa Product Presentation
2:00pm - 2:45pm Production Intercom "Wherever There's A Show"
2:00pm - 5:00pm Reel Screening
2:30pm - 3:30pm Moving Heads Shoot Out
3:30pm - 4:30pm 30 Second Powered Speaker Demo

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SEC urged to take over resources of troubled pre-need company

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER welfare advocate Raul T. Concepcion yesterday urged the government to push through with the planned takeover of the remaining resources of beleaguered pre-need firm College Assurance Plan (CAP) to protect some 700,000 plan holders.

Concepcion, who chairs the private sector watchdog Consumer and Oil Price Watch, said his group was making the call after a thorough review of the case and following a "display of lack of transparency" from CAP officials.

He said COPW would submit within the week its list of proposals to the Securities and Exchange Commission. The group said the SEC should consider:

- Creating a management committee to take over CAP and immediately address the deficiency of CAP's depleted trust fund;
- Asking CAP to return the trust funds and assets used to buy shares of stocks and properties from companies affiliated with or owned and managed by CAP's principal stockholders, officers and directors;
- Tapping a reputable and internationally recognized accounting firm to certify the financial condition of the various trust funds and act as an oversight committee during the takeover.

Last month, the regulating body had ordered CAP to explain why it should not be taken over and made to pay penalties for serious lapses in reportorial requirements.

Official data show that CAP has about 160,000 availing plan holders and P1.2 billion in liabilities as of October.

CAP's license to sell education plans was suspended last year as it struggled to find new capital to address its trust fund deficit.

Yesterday, Concepcion said the SEC should grant CAP a business permit only for selling fixed- or close-ended educational plans.

Also, Concepcion announced that CAP policy holders who wanted to join a class suit filed by Squia Pascual Lopez & Santos law firm should contact the lawyers at the Security Bank Center on Ayala Avenue, telephone numbers 810-8070 and 810-5699.

Oil surges to new ...

From page B1

bin Laden, who in the past has urged attacks against well-protected Gulf oil infrastructure.

The US warning also extended to seaborne vessels travelling in the southern Red Sea.

Iran, Opec's second biggest member, was also a focus of concern after Tehran resumed work at a uranium conversion plant on Monday, defying EU warnings that it could be referred to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions.

"The risk of such a scenario has increased substantially and that had to be priced in," said Kowalczyk.

The governors of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will hold an emergency meeting today, but diplomats said it was not likely to call for a U.N. referral just yet, giving the EU and Iran time for more talks.

Iran's resumption of work at the plant comes days after the inauguration of new conservative president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Oil traders worry he could take a hard line on the nuclear program, which the West fears is meant to develop atomic weapons.

Speculative fears about Middle East flows were complemented by fundamental factors in the United States, where more refinery glitches heightened doubts about whether summer fuel supplies would comfortably last the rest of the driving season.

Nearly a dozen refiners have been forced to close down units unexpectedly in the past few weeks as a summer of near full-throttle operations begins to take its toll.

Adding to the list, Sunoco Inc. shut its 200,000 barrel per day (bpd) Philadelphia refinery at the weekend after a fire, while Valero Energy Corp. also cut gasoline production by 50,000 bpd at its Sunray, Texas, refinery.

The glitches, coupled with still strong demand, are likely to cause another fall in weekly U.S. gasoline inventories, industry analysts predicted on Monday. Stocks were expected to draw by 1.8 million barrels while crude inventories dip just 200,000 barrels.

Pump prices in the United States reached a record high $2.37 a gallon last week, the government said on Monday, but the global economy has thus far largely shrugged off higher fuel costs.

Reuters

Cocktales

From page B3

themselves and re-awarding the Katipunan Road segment at White Plains to former Batangas Gov. Antonio Leviste.

More recently, Accralaw also leaked to us a copy of the marital case between the late industrialist Enrique Zobel and his estranged first wife, with the express request that the column come out without waiting for Zobel to be buried.

Despite being the leading counsel of Banque Nationale de Paris, Accralaw said it never handled the collection case, as we had reported Friday, the French bank had filed against the ailing Proton Group.

(The disputed allegation had been provided to Cocktales by another lawyer, representing the Audi Group, which is also suing Proton.)

And, contrary to what was reported here Friday, Accralaw said its partner Romulo Espaldon Jr. was never "boorish" in treating GSIS chair Winston Garcia during the controversial Equitable PCI Bank stockholders' meeting. It called the Friday account, where it also said Espaldon ordered the bank guards to escort Garcia out of the meeting, "a malicious lie."

Our sources, one bank director and another eyewitness, stand by our story.

Money-go-round

- MEGAWORLD will build the 17-condominium project with the Araneta Center in four different locations within the 35-hectare complex. The first cluster, whose groundbreaking is scheduled in the second quarter next year, will be constructed right next to the now decrepit New Frontier cinema.
- THE MAKATI Sports Club is trying to woo back its A-list members with its revamped menu, now provided by Seis Sabores, a joint venture of Home Meals Kitchens Corp. and Barcino Gourmet wine and deli distributor.

A brainchild of mestizo businessman Ricardo Soller, Home Meals supplies the paella and other Spanish dishes that are now also being served in the J. Vargas store of Barcino and the new RJ's Trim Cuisine on Jupiter Street in Bel Air.

Heard through the grapevine

THE GOKONGWEIS will inaugurate next week a Universal Robina factory in Vietnam for its Philippine-brand packaged foods, snacks and candy products.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

More carriers to use Cebu airport

From page B1

a P123-million improvement of its runway and had just purchased nine brand-new X-ray machines.

The airport authority is planning to acquire two movable air bridges worth P200 million each to augment the capacity of the existing terminal. The four air bridges could no longer accommodate the increasing number of flights landing and taking off from Cebu, Yap said.

Yap said the Mactan airport authority would need about P2 billion to finance the construction of a new passenger terminal. This facility would have to be built within the next three years to keep up with the increasing passenger volume in the Visayas airport.

He said the government would likely ask local banks to lend money so a new passenger terminal in Mactan could be built.

From about 2.5 million passengers last year, the Cebu airport is expecting to handle 5 million passengers in five years.

Yap said the Mactan airport would build two new movable air bridges to support the growing volume, which is expected to increase in the coming weeks when two South Korean carriers start mounting direct flights.

The airport authority uses a bus to bring or fetch passengers to an area far from the terminal every time the four existing bridges are being used.

Early this year, airlines complained that the Mactan airport's rough runway surface was damaging the tires of their aircraft. Some even threatened to pull out if the runway was not fixed.

ADB sees slower East Asian growth

From page B1

kets and softness in the information technology cycle as the main reasons for the worsening external economic environment.

Exports grew at a slower rate in the first half of this year in all of East Asia's larger economies except China, continuing the trend since the middle of last year, the report said.

Coupled with higher oil prices and a general bias to increase interest rates, the result has been a more tepid growth in domestic demand in most of the region's economies, it said.

AP

CREDIT TIGHTENING CAMPAIGN

More US Fed rate hikes seen

WASHINGTON—The Federal Reserve, responding to solid growth in the US economy after a brief slowdown early in the year, is expected to keep raising interest rates.

The Fed's credit tightening campaign will keep mortgage rates and other consumer interest rates rising as well but at a pace that should slow only modestly the nation's booming housing market, private economists believe.

Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan and his colleagues met yesterday to discuss what to do with interest rates.

There was a widespread expectation that the Fed will raise interest rates by a quarter-point. That would be the 10th consecutive increase in the Fed's target for the federal funds rate, the interest that banks charge each other.

The move would push the rate to 3.5 percent, the highest level since August 2001 and more than triple the 46-year low of one percent that was in effect before the Fed started raising rates in June 2004.

Although economists once expected the Fed to pause for a while in its rate hikes, many now believe the central bank will keep pushing rates higher at each of the remaining three meetings this year, leaving the funds rate at 4.25 percent by year's end.

The reason for the change of opinion has been an economy that is showing new vigor after a slowdown in the early spring. *AP*

BRIEFS

Japan economic outlook brightens, capex upbeat

TOKYO—Optimism about Japan's economy grew on Tuesday as robust machinery orders data suggested sustained growth in capital spending and the Bank of Japan upgraded its monthly economic view, citing a pick-up in export growth.

The assessment by the BOJ, which left monetary policy unchanged, followed a big upgrade in the International Monetary Fund's growth projection for Japan, and backed expectations that April-June growth data on Friday would be strong.

"Our judgement now shows the economy has almost broadly emerged from a stalled stage," BOJ Governor Toshihiko Fukui told a news conference after the central bank slightly upgraded its economic assessment for the second straight month.

Signs of a slowdown in exports, the traditional engine for Japan's economic growth, had worried economists only a few months ago. But growing prospects of a stronger global economy and evidence of surprising strength in domestic demand—capital spending and consumption—have brightened the outlook. *Reuters*

Morgan Stanley sets up $515-M Asia equity fund

HONG KONG—Morgan Stanley said on Tuesday that it has raised $515 million for its first private equity fund dedicated to investing in Asia, joining a spate of new funds focusing on emerging companies in the region.

Investors in the new fund, Morgan Stanley Private Equity Asia L.P., include the Wall Street giant as well as other institutions and wealthy individuals.

During the first half of 2005, private equity funds in Asia-Pacific outside Japan raised $2.8 billion in new commitments, up nearly 39 percent from a year earlier as a single fund—CVC Capital Partners Asia Pacific II—raised nearly $2 billion on its own, according to Thomson Financial.

Morgan Stanley's previous private equity investments in the region include stakes in No. 2 Chinese life underwriter Ping An Insurance Co. and the country's largest milk producer, Mengniu Dairy Co. Ltd., as well as Japanese wholesale broadband provider eAccess Ltd.

As is typical in private equity, the new fund will look to make its investments in the first five years, followed by a five-year "harvest" period, Morgan Stanley said. *Reuters*

US firms' profit growth seen hitting double digits

NEW YORK—US Standard & Poor's 500 earnings for the third and fourth quarter are poised to hit double-digit levels following the performance of corporate profits in the first half of the year, according to a Reuters Estimates report released on Monday.

S&P earnings in the second quarter are currently expected to rise 11.8 percent, making it the 13th quarter in a row to see earnings growth break through the 10-percent mark, according to Reuters Estimates.

As of Friday, of the 436 S&P 500 companies that reported quarterly earnings, 69.7 percent have beaten Wall Street expectations and only 16.3 percent have missed analysts' estimates.

S&P earnings for the third quarter are expected to rise 11.9 percent and for the fourth quarter are seen touching 10 percent, the Reuters Estimates report said. *Reuters*

Whirlpool sweetens offer for Maytag Corp.

ATLANTA—Whirlpool Corp. on Monday raised its takeover bid for Maytag Corp. by $2 a share to $1.6 billion, making a binding offer to acquire its smaller rival for $20 a share in a deal that would create the world's largest appliance maker.

Shares of Maytag, which has already agreed to a $14-a-share buyout by a group led by private equity firm Ripplewood Holdings, shot up as much as 11 percent. Whirlpool's stock rose as much as 7.2 percent to a new 12-month high.

Whirlpool cited confidence the deal would be approved by US regulators, and said it would pay a reverse break-up fee of $120 million if the transaction is blocked, as well as the $40 million fee to terminate Maytag's merger with Ripplewood.

Whirlpool would assume $977 million in Maytag debt.

In a letter to Maytag, Whirlpool also offered to provide up to $15 million to retain Maytag workers. *Reuters*

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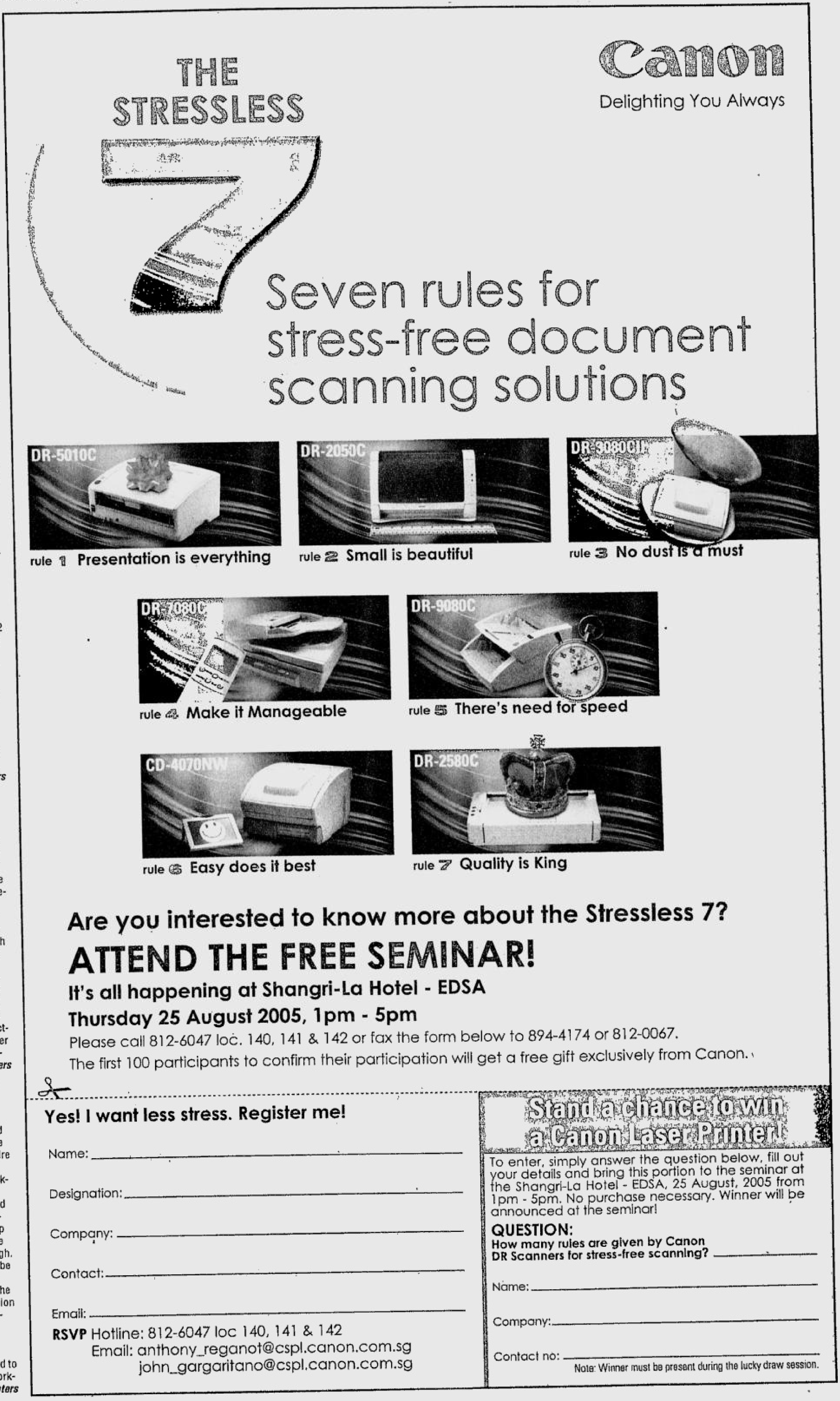
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PEOPLE at WORK

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Teacher on crutches walks students through math

By Raissa Claire Rivera
Contributor

TO BE qualified to become a teacher in the high school level, all one needs to do is to complete at least 18 units of certain education courses, pass the Licensure Exam for Teachers or get an MA in Education. But the job itself entails so much more: motivating young people to learn takes creativity and strength of character.

So why teach? And why in particular teach math, a subject most people perceive as difficult, to rowdy high school boys?

For many people, in fact, high school math—algebra, geometry, calculus—is so traumatic they would rather avoid it upon graduation. Not so for Susan Robles. "In high school, I had good math teachers," she recalls. She also found that the study of math didn't require much memorizing, a skill she says she was poor at, so she preferred it over other subjects.

ROBLES RAISSA RIVERA/CONTRIBUTOR

Wheelchair-bound

Robles enrolled in University of Santo Tomas' College of Education, with major in Math and minor in Filipino. Everything proceeded smoothly until her fourth year. That was when she had the accident. "I was crossing the street when a vehicle lost its brakes and hit me. I wasn't run over, but I was pinned under the car." A spinal cord injury resulted, and Robles stayed out of school for two years.

"After the accident, I thought I'd never go back to school," she recalls. While she was wheelchair-bound, it seemed unlikely. But through some miracle, her legs regained some of their mobility, and she was able to walk on crutches. With the encouragement of her family, she decided to finish school. Having come so close to getting her degree, it seemed a waste to just give up.

But even with her supportive father driving her around and waiting for her, going back to school on crutches was still a challenge. "Using the stairs when the elevator conks out is no joke. I was like a toddler learning how to walk again." Her physical therapists and doctors helped her in adjusting, and her sisters' love and support kept her going.

ALL ABOUT WORK

With honors

It helped that she had been doing well prior to the accident. She was further motivated to keep up her academic performance by her new, younger classmates' respectful treatment of her—it seemed they looked up to her as someone bright. "In short, I lived up to (my classmates') expectations." She subsequently graduated with a cum laude.

Probably because of her good academic background, Ateneo High School sent her a letter offering her a part-time position. "I was hesitant at first because I didn't like the school." Her thoughts were: "I'm middle class, my family is middle class, and what I think about when I hear the word 'Ateneo' is *mga sosyal*, rich people. Especially if I'm going to teach high school, I think I'm not going to be comfortable." She took the position offered but once on board, she didn't have to wait long for the full-time position she wanted, "The opportunity came when a full-time teacher resigned."

Gaining self-confidence

Ateneo acknowledged her disability by assigning her classrooms on the first floor and retreat quarters, but it took her two years to feel at home, after she had handled several good first year classes. Some of these students were to remain friends with her up to their fourth year. "On my seventh year, I had established self-confidence ..."

Though she found it necessary to get over her shyness, she doesn't see it necessary to terrorize students. She feels that a teacher should also be able to joke around. Handling students, she believes, means "putting your foot down and at the same time letting them know that you're their teacher, you're here to help them."

It is especially important to deliver the impression of being helpful since most students "have that notion that math is difficult." She gives importance to making students "think that they can go beyond themselves" rather than give in to their fear of the subject. Robles tries to make her students see that "what they think is what they are." She finds that many students do rise to her challenge and come to like math because of her encouragement.

Handling teenagers

Admittedly, she has an advantage in handling the boys, apart from her being an effective math teacher. They are more respectful to her due to her handicap. Teenage boys may not be known for tact, but "I haven't encountered, thank God, anyone who laughed at my predicament... If they are close to me already they make light of it, make fun of it, but because they know me already, (and they know) that I won't get mad."

Private school students generally do fairly well in math. Robles believes that since private school students have more access to computers, this accelerates their learning and increase their sophistication. Still she maintains that computers are not as essential as hands-on solving in understanding math concepts.

Teachers also need to keep up-to-date, and Ateneo is highly supportive of their teachers' continuing education, partially funding their tuition. Also, Robles says, "In (our) Math Department, we're trying to reach out this year to public school teachers." Projects like these increase her regard for the school.

Despite the stairs to climb (the computer lab is on the second floor, and sometimes she has no choice but to teach in rooms on the second floor), she now feels at home in Ateneo. And if at times she finds the routine of having to wake up at five in the morning to beat the traffic monotonous, she is uplifted by seeing her students light up with understanding. "Teaching math is rewarding when the students' reactions are *'Ahh... 'yun lang pala.'*" One fourth-year class even applauded her after one lesson. "It really felt good... I felt that they understood."

Despite all the challenges she encountered, Robles finds her life with her husband and their three-year-old daughter complete.

'I want to start my own business'

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I WORKED my way up to become a plant manager. I am working with a company owned by a Filipino-Chinese family. I have been in this company for more than 10 years. I get a salary and commissions. Now my boss' kids have grown up, I have more bosses than before.

I am thinking of starting my own company. It will not be entirely in the same line of business as I am in now. I am sure people will talk behind my back and make remarks on my lack of loyalty.

I don't want to find work with our competitors because I started with this company and owe them some loyalty. Can you give me some advice? Thanks.

Burnt Out

Thank you for your letter. I understand from your letter that the source of your "burnt out" feeling has to do with having to report to too many bosses. If you love your work because it provides well for your family, you might want to confront the problem. Your challenge may be conflicting directions coming from your boss and his children. I propose finding the right time to discuss with your original boss your problem or dilemma (you have worked many years with him and are familiar with his ways).

While today is the decade of multitasking and in multinational organizations, some people may have matrix-reporting relationships, in your plant, you may find too

'I WANT/B7

A message from the organizers of the 5th Direct Marketing Forum

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Here's what Britain's top marketer (largely responsible for London's successful bid to host the 2012 Olympics) says about Drayton Bird:

"Drayton showed me the difference between a booking and a customer, and in so doing helped make our marketing budget a least twice as effective." **David Magliano,** Director of Marketing – London Olympics 2012

Here's the good news for those looking forward to this year's DMFORUM:

For the Direct Marketing Forum this August 24th, we're bringing in Drayton Bird, the 'secret weapon' used by Olympic marketers like David above and the creative genius behind some of the world's best direct marketing campaigns (he's worked with the likes of Toyota, American Express, British Telecom, Microsoft, The Reader's Digest, Hewlett-Packard, Ford, Visa, McKinsey & Partners, Unilever, Price Waterhouse, Procter & Gamble, Nestle, and British Airways). Drayton is also the best-selling author of Commonsense Direct Marketing and Marketing Insights and Outrages and is listed among the Top 50 Marketers in the World (together with the likes of Philip Kotler, Al Ries, and David Aaker). David Ogilvy, the late advertising legend said, "Drayton Bird knows more about direct marketing than anyone else in the world."

This year's DMF is going to be unusual. We usually have more than one speaker. But to give Drayton an hour or half a day to share with you his insights and secrets would be a crime. So we're asking him to take the whole day to teach us how to make more profit, create more customers, and supercharge our marketing.

Here's a sampling of what Drayton will share at the DMForum on August 24 at the Makati Shangrila:

- **How to get lots more sales from your ads and mailings.** (Avoiding the seven deadly sins of direct marketing.)
- **How Direct Marketing and CRM works – and how it can build your brands**
- Creating, compelling, **sticky creatives that deliver response and results.**
- **How to distinguish between good and bad work**
- Design and Copy: **How design and layout can help – or kill – response**
- **How to write so people want to start reading** - and keep reading so eagerly they can't wait to reply
- The thing that's more important than a USP – and how to find it for your business
- **Choosing the right media – internet, email, tv, direct mail, radio, print?:** Proven formulae and techniques that work in all media, on-line and off, print and broadcast.
- What's missing from 90% of messages
- **Business to Business DM:** What you have to adapt for business-to-business

Every year we organize the DMForum, we get feedback like this:

"We truly enjoyed the DM Forum. The DMF was packed with very practical information that we can use to make our Marketing campaigns a lot more effective." - **Che Che Rivera,** AIG Credit Card

"I personally found the event enriching, giving me new insights on how our team can further innovate our own direct marketing efforts!" - **Maricel delos Santos,** Director, Holiday Inn Manila

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You see how even a good ad or mailing can be improved to become much better – with the figures to prove it. And of course, you see how a money-loser can become profitable – with, in one case, a sequence of four tests.

You see the remarkable results of some simple ideas most marketers are unwilling to try (and why they don't). And you see how seemingly small changes make mailings, ads, websites and emails multiply their responses.

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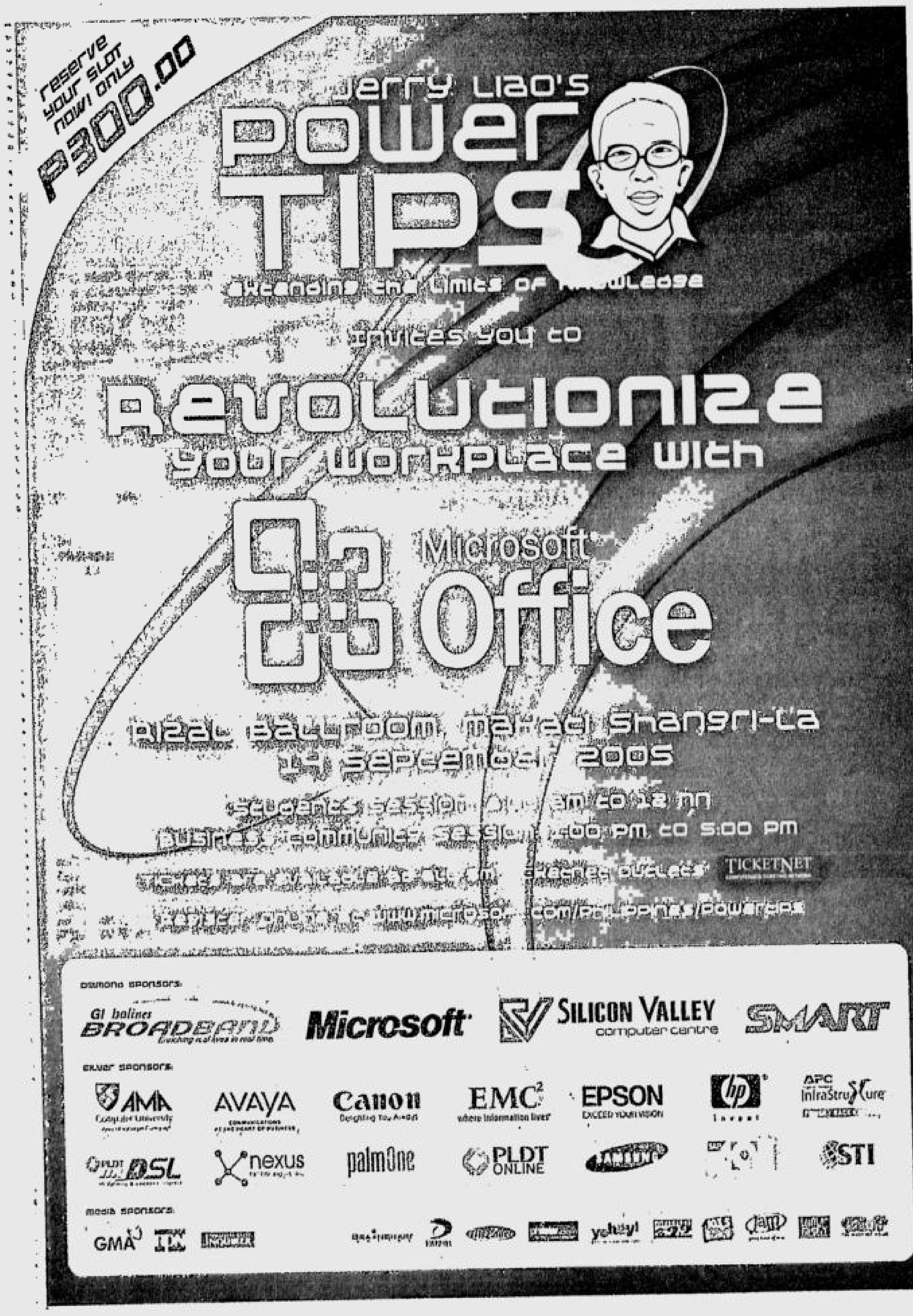

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Women vs men at work?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR Readers: I received the following e-mail from a woman about the different styles of men and women and I thought it raised interesting points.

"As a kid growing up on a farm, I was very aware of what was 'men's work' and what was 'women's work.' Men were responsible for things like mucking out cow pens, hoeing and cleaning chicken coops. Women scrubbed floors, dusted and vacuumed. Our paths did not cross and we certainly didn't share work. Apart. Simple.

"Today, I work in a conservatively managed high-tech firm where there are very few women in management. The unfortunate part of this equation is that most of the company is managed from a 'point and delegate' approach, something men seem to do with ease. As an acting manager and woman (I do the work of my previous man-manager for my same salary and no title, but I'm not bitter), I've discovered my management style is more 'coach.' I have a hard time delegating because sometimes in the time it takes to describe the task and check for understanding, I could have completed it myself. My previous manager had no problem assigning tasks that were as simple as 'point 'N click.'

"When there's a question with work I've assigned, I try to respond as constructively as I can with further appropriate guidance. When I've provided finished product to my male counterparts that requires more work, I will hear that it's wrong, but with no further instruction. It is, again, the 'make it so' approach and it leaves me wondering if I ever left the farm.

"It seems to me that men make an assumption that in the telling of the task, the details of their request will become clear. As a woman, I've discovered I need more guidance.

"Which leads me to my other distinction between men's and women's management styles. As women, we worry about what something will sound like as it leaves our mouth, having crossed the great divide between frontal lobe and lips. On a good day, we spend a few seconds thinking of the appropriate expression for an idea. In a recent meeting, I witnessed an outright attack on an idea by one of my more astute male colleagues. I spoke up in defense of the idea, in a manner similar to a mom telling a small child to 'be kind.'

"I can admit that as women, we have our own brand of management that is not perfect; we can be ruthless and calculating. In our hands, character assassination is a deadly art form and it happens in seconds. We're notorious for not sharing information simply because of the power in the knowledge that we've worked so hard to gain. This is not to say that men have not worked hard, it's just that they are the historical managers, it has been their birthright. I wonder how different work would be today if our roles had been reversed and women had managed first."

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: Which best sums up your feelings about men and women at work?

—I'd rather work for a woman, 8.7 percent

—I'd rather work for a man, 34.9 percent

—It honestly doesn't make a difference to me, 56.3 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

What works in career support programs

PEOPLE at Work and the Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD) partner to listen to the heartbeats of working people through this People at Work Pulse. The results of this poll will be published the following month. To quicken your response rates, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ateneo CORD will be giving gift packages to two respondents to be drawn from those who replied for the month.

Winners from last month's survey are **Jho Anne De Guzman** and **Gache Alcoveridas** (please contact Ateneo CORD at 426-5931 to claim your prizes).

PEOPLE AT WORK *Pulse*

1. Is your current job your chosen career?
___ A. Yes
___ B. No
___ C. Don't know

2. Do you have a career plan?
___ A. Yes
___ B. No

3. Do you know your career option in your organization?
___ A. Yes
___ B. No

4. Who is mainly responsible for your career development?
____ A. Myself
____ B. Supervisor
____ C. HR (Human Resources)

5. Which of the following does your organization provide?
___ A. Coaching from supervisor
___ B. Career planning workshops
___ C. Mentoring programs
___ D. Training programs
___ E. Information on career options or paths
___ F. Information on promotion opportunities

6. From the choices in number 5, what would help most in your career growth?
____

Name: ____________________
Gender: ____________ Age: ________ Position: ____________
Nature of Job: ____________________
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Industry: ____________ Number of years working: ________
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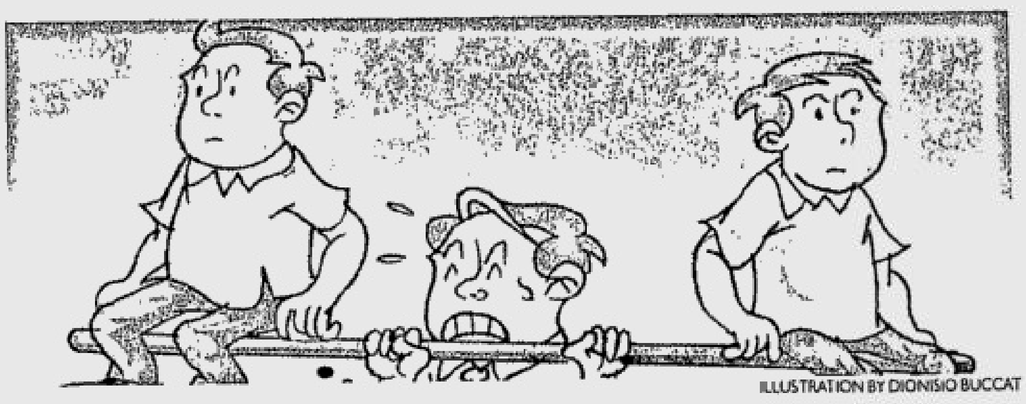

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

'I want to start my own ...

From page B6

many bosses suffocating and frustrating. If your discussion does not resolve your problem, then explore other options.

Entrepreneurship test

One option that you want to explore is starting your own company. In other words, you want to be an entrepreneur. I think this is exciting, but before moving on, ask yourself if you have the aptitude and skills to become one. Webster's dictionary defines an entrepreneur as "a person who organizes and manages a business undertaking, assuming the risk for the sake of profit." Peter Drucker, who is considered as the father of modern management, very briefly puts it as "someone who gets something new done."

Do a small test to find out. You are an entrepreneur if you read the newspaper or watch television and can readily spot business opportunities. While you experience difficulties at work, you actively seek out solutions instead of complaining. You are adaptable and can easily bounce back from disappointments. You possess boundless optimism, enthusiasm and energy. You love change; you see change as opportunity rather than threat.

You like working; work fuels your day. You enjoy taking and assuming responsibility. You are good at thinking of concepts and selling them to friends. You are likely to vision a lot, daydream of possibilities. You have tried as a child, exploring your environment, and even got paid for doing a chore or favor to someone.

Profound understanding

If you answered yes to all the characteristics mentioned above, then you might have the makings of an entrepreneur. But before plunging into setting up your business, I agree with a quality guru that you must have a profound and deep understanding of the business that you are getting into. In fact, sometimes the best way to ensure that you do not get into something you don't understand is to buy a book.

One time, a close friend told me she wanted to put up a restaurant. Knowing that she did not have experience running a restaurant, I bought her a book on restaurant management. After a month, she came back telling me she changed her mind. She understood that starting one would involve 15 to 20 hour working days, especially at the startup stage. Then, she realized that location was a primary consideration and factor. Most of the good locations are in malls and the cost of rent was way beyond her budget. Getting into a business requires knowledge and dedication.

'I WANT B8

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It's an issue of survival—and peace of mind

WORKING MOM

Gina Abuyuan

TASTELESS joke of a month ago: one of our operations officers comes by my cubicle and tells me, "Gina, you have to change your cover." "What?!" I half-scream, already thinking bludgeon and whip. "Yeah," he tells me. "It has to be Gloria and your title will have to be changed to 'Non-Working Mom.' " I laugh despite the unkindness of it. Believe me, when deadlines are like a blade upon your neck and the bonuses depend on deadline compliance, turning into a Mrs. Hyde is normal in our line of work.

A week after, the rallies that threaten to overthrow PGMA are gaining momentum. Just as well. A couple of hours before the 40,000-something strong anti-PGMA crowd amasses at Makati, we and other empowered women from media are at a press lunch for a breakthrough credit card, nibbling on *prosciutto*-wrapped around garlic sticks. Back at the office, we glimpse at Susan Roces address the throng on the TV, and turn back to our proofreading.

College days

The whole disinterestedness, the whole disenchantment of it all reminds me of a day in college: student activists had forced the school to call off classes to protest against the rising tuition fees and STFAP. It was the same day our fraternity brothers invited alumni *brods* over to lunch. They set up a white tent in the parking lot to give shade to the catered buffet and tables. We, the sisters, watched from the AS steps.

The rallyists marched between us. It's not that we didn't care about current events and politics (heck, we have two of the most prominent leaders of modern political history as *brods*—and a woman president as honorable sis). It's just that it was the nth rally of the semester. We were getting so used to entering our classrooms only to find "Boycott classes!" scribbled on the blackboard. So, well, shrug. It was turning out to be an extended summer vacation. Which is what life is all about when you're a student.

Survival

These days, life is all about survival when you're a working mom. Well, at least for me. My family was active during Edsa 1. I marched on Edsa myself during Edsa 2. But somewhere in between then and now, I was back on those steps. (Hmmm, one highlight was probably when I found out how many nurses the president's granddaughter has—or had, when we did a feature on Angela Arroyo in 2003. Answer: eight). "The chasm between rich and poor is getting bigger," people have been saying for the past five years or so. When I first heard that, I vowed to myself never to be at the bottom half of that divide. I swore it with the intensity I had when I was a teenager, promising my mom that she would be proud of me someday no matter how rebellious I was. "*Itaga mo sa bato 'yan*," I remember telling her, snot and tears running down my face.

So what did I care then when people are marching in Makati and Manila; what do I care, when I still have half a month's rent to pay and my daughter's next quarter's tuition to take care of? With the indifferent sigh of a well-known director about to launch a new program, who recently said to me, "Well, the show's going to air on the XXth. Who knows if we'll have the same president then?", I face the following days with narrow-sightedness and resignation. "All I'm going to do is work and take care of my daughter," another upcoming editor has lashed out over lunch more than once. "That's it! That's all I have my sights set on now!"

Big dreams

Indeed, we—the working class, the parents who have nothing in their hearts but big dreams for their children, such as our parents did when they reared and raised us in this once-promising country of ours—don't seem to care less now. How dare these politicians believe that they really know what's going on when they haven't tasted the desperation we mere mortals have to deal with everyday? I'm already editor in chief of a nationwide-circulated magazine. Can they even fathom what life is like for people like Manang Stella, who does our laundry, cleans my mom's office, does housework for another *amo* who runs a meat shop (and from whom I also order my pork chop and *pang-sinigang* to give her a little sideline)?

My mom, who was musing out loud about whom they would replace GMA with if ever she does go ("sino pa kaya?"—and OMG, let's not forget Roco's now gone, too!), asked me what I thought of the situation. My temper rose, albeit unfairly, but not towards her. "I don't care what happens, as long as I can feed my kids and they're happy, healthy and safe," I snapped. At once I felt ashamed at how my issues of survival have rendered me apathetic to the "bigger picture."

Or have they? One morning, at the height of the "PGMA resign" rallies, I found myself praying fervently, for the first time: "Dear God, why can't we just all look at ourselves, gain some perspective, and get along?"

Peace, please!

During that same press luncheon we attend the day of the Makati rally, we are asked to write down what we would like to buy for ourselves, and what our hearts wish for if we had the means. These were to be read out loud by the host, and the owners of the wishes guessed by the audience. Predictably, being all women, some write, "shoes, shoes, shoes!" and "bags, bags, bags!" One, a trip to New York and all-season passes to Broadway. Another, a hotel. My seatmate, a beautiful fashion editor of a sister magazine, writes, "true love." I write down: "an I-book, an idea for a Booker Prize-winning novel, and peace!" It's no joke. And it's also something money can't buy.

(Ms Gina Abuyuan is editor in chief of Working Mom magazine. Get your copy now, with Carmina Villaroel and twins Mavy and Cassy on the cover. Feedback is welcome at gina_abuyuan@abs.pinoy-central.com.)

Cell phones keep employees on call for work 24/7

By Loree Cruz-Mante
Contributor

IN THE EARLY days of what we may call the beginnings of the modern office, communication was carried out through mail, telephone, telex, telegraph and courier. Much later, there was fax and then e-mail. Today, face-to-face meetings continue for most workplaces, although the borgchat, instant messenger, and e-mail are slowly taking over the need to walk into the boss's office for a work-related concern.

Now at the center stage of most internal and external communicating modalities is the all-pervasive, omnipresent, and you-can't-leave-home-without-it gadget called the cell phone. As the "texting capital of the world," this country has put high-tech and high-touch into the hands of the ordinary man on the street who may never get to work a microwave or open a computer but who can press away like a technological whiz on a cell phone.

Because of the cell phone, workplace decorum has radically changed since its appearance. While the cell has made connectivity as easy as a "message sent" appearing on the screen, it has also affected the workplace in very dramatic and colorful ways. Depending on whose vantage point you are looking from, the cell phone can be the best or worst thing to come to this planet.

No office hours

The cell phone has made "office hours" an obsolete term. Working hours are no longer limited to when there is someone in the office to take a call or attend to business. The cell phone has removed the dependency on physical presence in a physical office. A boss' need for information from his secretary, for example, does not have to be put on hold until the next day because the secretary is always just a text away.

The fact that everyone is "just a text away" is precisely why the cell phone has also become a problem for the ordinary working individual. While it has allowed business to go on unhampered by the confines of working hours, it has also put workers on a 24/7 situation, where even vacations, leave days and holidays may no longer be respected by their employers. Workers may be "recalled" and put to task even as they are sunbathing in Boracay or hibernating in a spa. If the cell phone were not there, workers can enjoy their hard-earned rest with nary a thought that they can be disturbed in the most unwanted moments.

Less productive work

One would have to be very courageous (or desperately wanting to be fired) to openly read comics or play computer games during office hours where the expectation is clearly that one must be working.

But that is not the case with the cell phone. Texting is hardly considered a form of goofing off the way that other time wasters are classified as non-work. And yet, if one adds up the amount of time workers spend pressing away at the cell phone keys when they are supposed to be working, the figure can be predictably rather staggering!

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

If every text message could be simply a bit of information, then perhaps the loss of productive work would not be something for employers to worry about. The truth, however, is that the time loss does not only have to do with the actual time reading the message. More time-consuming are the emotional upheavals, roller coasters and passion flights triggered by messages received. One can get bouts of nostalgia for an absent spouse, blush pink at an "I love you" or run amok with devastating news about the children. One can even get officemates to congregate and jointly drool over a thrilling private message from a sweetheart. The passions stirred by simple text messages are unimaginable. There is reason for employers to be alarmed.

On the other hand, texting has also served as a valuable tool for heightening productivity by providing spaces for inspiration, balm for anxiety, instant answers to worrisome concerns, or simply moments for catching one's breath amidst tons of work stresses.

Acceptable decorum

The cell phone has triggered changes in acceptable norms at work. Take for example, a staff meeting where everyone is expected to listen and participate meaningfully in the discussion. Because there are seldom any specific "rules" that indicate that texting or receiving calls is prohibited, it is often acceptable to have attendees texting away, a behavior that is justified by one's multitasking skills, in this case the ability to listen to the speaker and compose or read a text message at the same time. Leaving the room to answer a call on the cell phone is even regarded as an act of courtesy for which the rest of the group should be grateful because the person was kind enough not to disturb the ongoing discussion.

Many workplaces have yet to come up with their own set of guidelines to govern the use of cell phones during work hours. This exercise may not be as simple as writing up rules for the use of the telephone or the copier because it is almost next to impossible to determine allowable calls. One would literally have to wiretap to sift personal from work-related calls.

Status symbol

There was a time when one's worth in an organization was measured by the size of the room or desk, the kind of inbox tray, the upholstered chair. In many ways, those symbolic indicators still exist today.

The cell phone, however, has added itself to the list of status symbols for which many a worker would spend a good part of hard-earned take-home pay for. To many, the kind of cell phone determines a person's place in the scheme of things. One must be seen to have the latest model to be counted worthy.

The interesting thing, though, is that the cell phone is also a great equalizer, where the distinction between boss and subordinate can disappear when they share the same or equally expensive cell phone model. Certainly, it makes the taxi driver and his passenger, the hairdresser and her client, and the *kasambahay* and her employer equal partakers of the bounty of technology. It doesn't matter where and how the cell phone was acquired.

Here to stay

The cell phone revolution has slowly inched its way into workplaces, quietly and surreptitiously entrenching itself in the lives of the working populace until the cell phone has become the norm rather than the deviation. Although texting has radically influenced the world of work as we know it in both desirable and not-so-desirable ways, it still remains a phenomenon that both employers and employees must learn to use for their mutual benefit.

Why has the cell phone mania escalated to such proportions? Because as long as Filipino workers continue to value connectivity and are driven to pursue it at all costs, the cell phone will be here for a long, long time—until someone comes up with a bright new idea to replace it.

(Ms Loree Cruz-Mante is a human resources and organization development practitioner, published writer, and consultant with leading transitions management firm DBM.)

'I want to start ...

From page B7

Vital to an entrepreneur is to determine the products and services he or she is offering to a particular set of customers. Unless a customer out there is willing to part with his or her precious pesos in exchange for your product and service, then you are not in business. An entrepreneur is good at selling and marketing and seeking out customers. Timidity will not work.

Then, make sure you understand the numbers involved in running a business like basic accounting, financial statements and taxes. You have to understand the logic of your business. You must know how you will turn a profit. You have to be comfortable with borrowing and managing debt.

Leadership role

Then, when you hire people, make sure you choose the right ones based on competence but also on attitude. You would need information about labor laws and the minimum wage and the rights of workers and employers. A copy of the Labor Code would be useful.

Finally, take charge. Assume leadership for your enterprise. Unlike when you are employed, you can depend on the boss to set directions and ensure that the enterprise stays afloat. This time, you take the lead.

I agree with you that it is a good idea not to work for your competitor. It always pays to be grateful to someone who gave you the skills and the breaks to move up to plant manager position. May your business prosper. God bless.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax to* 892-2902.)

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December 31, 2004
(in thousand pesos)

Balance Sheet

Particulars	2004	2003	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
ASSETS				
Current Assets	**971,389,231.0**	**969,334,756.1**	**2,054,474.9**	**0.2**
Cash	141,984,410.0	175,259,509.5	(33,275,099.6)	(19.0)
Receivables	759,313,984.4	736,544,223.0	22,769,761.4	3.1
Inventories	20,592,014.0	18,116,918.1	2,475,095.8	13.7
Prepayments	46,770,896.2	37,637,131.3	9,133,764.9	24.3
Other Current Assets	2,727,926.5	1,776,974.2	950,952.3	53.5
Investments	**668,009,374.3**	**611,145,530.9**	**56,863,843.4**	**9.3**
Property, Plant and Equipment (net of Depreciation)	**708,232,303.5**	**740,503,966.7**	**(32,271,663.3)**	**(4.4)**
Land, Land Improvements and Leasehold Improvements	215,241,590.4	239,792,388.2	(24,550,797.8)	(10.2)
Buildings and Leasehold Improvements	115,465,053.7	118,829,030.1	(3,363,976.4)	(2.8)
Office Equipment, Furniture and Fixtures	28,224,525.5	28,974,309.2	(749,783.7)	(2.6)
Machineries and Equipment	42,333,787.6	44,860,617.7	(2,526,830.1)	(5.6)
Transportation Equipment	16,873,224.8	18,572,488.8	(1,699,264.1)	(9.1)
Other Property, Plant and Equipment and Leasehold Improvements	85,771,273.6	117,693,742.1	(31,922,468.5)	(27.1)
Construction in Progress	204,322,847.9		32,541,457.4	18.9
Other Assets	**15,669,106.5**	**19,618,556.4**	**(3,949,449.9)**	**(20.1)**
TOTAL ASSETS	**2,363,300,015.3**	**2,340,602,810.2**	**22,697,205.0**	**1.0**
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY				
Current Liabilities	**225,895,902.8**	**204,096,579.5**	**21,799,323.3**	**10.7**
Payable Accounts	197,278,193.7	174,501,247.9	22,776,945.8	13.1
Other Liability Accounts	28,617,709.1	29,595,331.6	(977,622.5)	(3.3)
Long-Term Liabilities	**3,706,276,822.7**	**3,321,563,721.9**	**384,713,100.8**	**11.6**
Domestic	2,008,639,090.7	1,759,979,448.2	248,659,642.5	14.1
Foreign	1,697,637,732.0	1,561,584,273.7	136,053,458.3	8.7
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**3,932,172,725.5**	**3,525,660,301.5**	**406,512,424.1**	**11.5**
Deferred Credits	**57,305,809.4**	**11,786,017.7**	**45,519,791.7**	**386.2**
Equity				
Government Equity [1]	(1,626,178,519.7)	(1,196,843,509.0)	(429,335,010.8)	35.9
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	**2,363,300,015.2**	**2,340,602,810.2**	**22,697,205.0**	**1.0**

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off

[1] *See details in statement below*

Statement of Government Equity

Particulars	2004	2003	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
Government Equity, Beginning Balance	**(1,196,843,509.0)**	**(940,039,401.7)**	**(256,804,107.3)**	**27.3**
Retained Operating Surplus	**(429,335,010.8)**	**(256,804,107.3)**	**(172,530,903.5)**	**67.2**
Current Operations	(344,176,672.2)	(173,952,396.3)	(170,224,275.9)	97.9
Transfer to Registry of Public Infrastructures	(144,861,155.1)	(197,077,331.9)	52,216,176.8	(26.5)
Transfer to Registry of Reforestation Projects	(1,780,224.1)	(2,124,820.0)	344,596.0	(16.2)
Prior Years' and Other Adjustments	61,483,040.6	116,350,440.9	(54,867,400.3)	(47.2)
Government Equity, Ending Balance	**(1,626,178,519.7)**	**(1,196,843,509.0)**	**(429,335,010.8)**	**35.9**

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off

Statement of Income and Expenses

Particulars	2004	2003	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
INCOME	**725,531,993.4**	**653,652,786.9**	**71,879,206.6**	**11.0**
Tax Revenue	604,171,987.0	550,859,022.4	53,312,964.6	9.7
General Income	121,360,006.4	102,793,764.5	18,566,241.9	18.1
Permits and Licenses	457,451.9	453,163.8	4,288.1	0.9
Service Income	46,741,559.3	40,917,054.8	5,824,504.5	14.2
Business Income	8,122,411.9	4,125,281.5	3,997,130.4	96.9
Other Income	66,038,583.2	57,298,264.4	8,740,318.8	15.3
LESS: OPERATING EXPENSES	**363,450,173.4**	**345,909,528.6**	**17,540,644.8**	**5.1**
Personal Services	282,071,276.4	279,627,611.0	2,443,665.4	0.9
Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses	81,378,897.0	66,281,917.5	15,096,979.5	22.8
Net Income from Current Operations	**362,081,820.0**	**307,743,258.3**	**54,338,561.7**	**17.7**
Less: Financial Expenses	294,867,730.6 [1]	253,239,155.1	41,628,575.5	16.4
Net Income Before Other Income/Expenses	**67,214,089.4**	**54,504,103.2**	**12,709,986.2**	23.3
Add/(Deduct):				
Subsidy to:	**(179,559,323.6)**	**(196,360,781.5)**	**(16,801,457.9)**	**(8.6)**
Local Government Units	(140,170,839.9)	(143,899,818.3)	(3,728,978.4)	(2.6)
Government Owned and Controlled Corporations	(17,987,760.6)	(23,777,461.9)	(5,789,701.3)	(24.3)
Others	(21,400,723.0)	(28,683,501.2)	(7,282,778.2)	(25.4)
Net Gain (Loss):	**(231,831,438.0)**	**(32,095,718.1)**	**(199,735,720.0)**	**622.3**
Absorption of National Power Corporation's Liabilities	(195,481,638.2) [2]	-	(195,481,638.2)	
Foreign Exchange (FOREX)	(36,223,842.0)	(31,808,820.0)	(4,415,021.9)	13.9
Sale of Securities	60,519.7	223,597.9	(163,078.2)	(72.9)
Sale of Disposed Assets	(31,637.6)	(475,729.1)	444,091.5	(93.3)
Others	(154,840.0)	(34,766.8)	(120,073.2)	345.4
Net Income (Loss)	**(344,176,672.2)**	**(173,952,396.3)**	**(170,224,275.9)**	**97.9**

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off

Notes:

[1] *Includes Interest Expenses of P279 billion for servicing of public debt and Loss on Guaranty of P9.9 billion for the servicing of the MRT 1 Loan and foreign exchange risk cover claims for National Government guaranteed obligations*

[2] *Pursuant to RA 9136 (Electric Power Industry Reform Act)*

Statement of Cash Flows

Particulars	2004	2003	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
Cash Flow from Operating Activities:				
Cash Inflows	1,427,179,205.3	1,205,725,327.9	221,453,877.4	18.4
Cash Ouflows	1,256,014,692.6	1,121,457,832.1	134,556,860.5	12.0
Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities	**171,164,512.7**	**84,267,495.8**	**86,897,016.9**	**103.1**
Cash Flow from Investing Activities:				
Cash Inflows	312,260,948.5	122,751,379.5	189,509,569.0	154.4
Cash Ouflows	537,404,924.6	273,980,459.1	263,424,465.5	96.1
Cash Provided (Used) by Investing Activities	**(225,143,976.1)**	**(151,229,079.5)**	**(73,914,896.6)**	**48.9**
Cash Flow from Financing Activities:				
Cash Inflows	1,586,966,211.7 [1]	1,509,612,791.3	77,353,420.4	5.1
Cash Ouflows	1,566,261,848.0 [2]	1,413,344,222.8	152,917,625.2	10.8
Cash Provided (Used) by Financing Activities	**20,704,363.7**	**96,268,568.5**	**(75,564,204.8)**	**(78.5)**
Total Cash provided by Operating, Investing and Financing Activities	**(33,275,099.6)**	**29,306,984.8**	**(62,582,084.4)**	**(213.5)**
Add: Cash Balance, Beginning	**175,259,509.5**	**145,726,142.1**	**29,533,367.4**	**20.3**
Cash Balance at the End	**141,984,410.0**	**175,033,126.9** [3]	**(33,048,717.0)**	**(18.9)**

Difference between total and sum of components is due to rounding off

Notes:

[1] *Includes proceeds from Domestic and Foreign Loans of P1,386.3 billion and P172.6 billion, respectively*

[2] *Includes payment of Domestic Loans - P1,177.7 billion, Foreign Loans - P117 billion, Relent and Guaranteed Loans - P45.4 billion, Interest Expenses - P204.8 billion, Commitment Charges - P238.5 million, Other Financial Charges - P651.5 million, Debt Service Subsidy to Defunct and/or Fully Disposed GOCCs - P3 billion, Currency Swap Payable - P6.3 billion and Loss on Guaranty - P9.8 billion*

[3] *Excludes P226.4 million cash balance per 2003 Balance Sheet of the agencies which failed to submit their individual Statement of Cash Flows*

ERRATUM

In the advertisement of COMMISSION ON AUDIT published on August 6, 2005 on this page, the following information were inadvertently published:

PARTICULARS should be	AMOUNT
Property, Plant and Equipment (net of Depreciation)	(32, 271, 663.3)
Government Equity	(429, 335, 010.8)

Our apologies.

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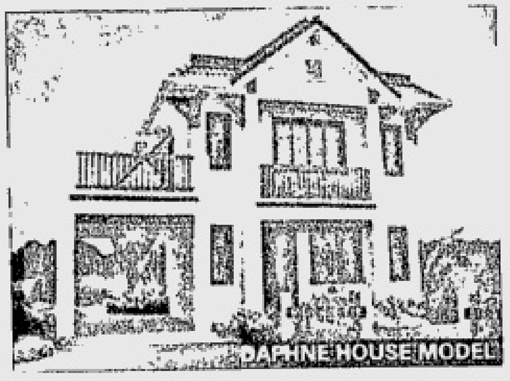

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National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-MMSD 2005-020

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements.

Schedule	Date/Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No./Inquiry No.	ABC
I	Sept. 6, 2005 10:00 AM Kañao Room	Electrical Parts for Oriental Mindoro Substation & 69 KV "Siemens"	PB050804-MMKR3133 (PB2)	P 2,935,000.00
II		Mechanical Parts for Power Barge 108 "Daihatsu"	PB050906-MMAM3350	4,667,000.00
III		Crankshaft Assembly for SPUG Mindanao "Perkins"	PB050906-MMAM3351	1,750,000.00
IV	Sept. 6, 2005 2:00 PM Kañao Room	Supply of labor, tools, materials and equipment for emergency Dry-docking of PB 108	PB050906-MMAD3352	1,700,000.00
V		Furnish Labor, expertise, tools, equipment, consumables and parts for the Reblading of VTR 304 Turbo Charger Rotor Shaft Assy. of Jolo DPP	PB050906-MMAM3353	1,655,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Schedule I - III	Aug. 24, 2005	10:00 AM	MMD Bidding Room
Schedule IV - V	Aug. 24, 2005	2:00 PM	MMD Bidding Room

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Division, Materials Management Dept., of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 9245357/9245477 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php 2,000.00 per Schedules I & II and P1,000.00 for Schedules III & V starting on **August 10, 2005**, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. only. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, MMSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit - One Percent (1%), Bank Guarantee - One and a half percent (1.5%), Surety Bond - Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids; and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) **LORENZO S. MARCELO**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
MMSD-NPC

(PDI - Aug. 10 & 17, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late PANFILO M. ABENOJAR has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs on July 23, 2005 before Pacifico A. Tunac, Notary Public in and for Quezon City as per Doc. No. 55, Page No.12, Book XIX, Series of 2005 (PDI-July 27, Aug. 3, & 10, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that 1600 GLOBE MACKAY A Stock Cert. # 77194 issued to FE LEANO has been lost. If no contest is received new cert. will be issue. (PDI-Aug. 3, 10, 17, '05)

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PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.

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OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

LOURDES (Lulu) LACSON MONFORT

Passed away on August 8, 2005

Her children: Toots and Gina,
Gina
Ed and Tina

Her grandchildren: Issa, Miggy, Miko,
Carmela, Patty and Carlo.

Her cremains are at
Christ the King Church,
Greenmeadows Avenue, Quezon City,
where the funeral Mass will be held at
2:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 11, 2005.

You are gone...
But for us you never left...
God has you in his keeping
We have you in our hearts.

DARIO S. SANTOS

Peacefully joined our Lord
on August 8, 2005 at the age of 81.

His remains lie in state at 2300 Buendia St., Balut, Tondo, Manila.

Interment will be held on Saturday, August 13, 2005 at the Laloma Cemetery after the 1:00 p.m. Holy Mass at San Rafael Parish Church.

We love you...

I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.
John 14:6

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION

mourns the passing of

Sen. Raul Roco

Former SMC Director and Corporate Secretary

San Miguel officers and employees
request the pious readers to pray for
his eternal repose.

We design
OBITUARIES for free.

Message of Thanks

We, **Odette**, **Liza**, **Bing**, **Angie**, **Nana**, **Nonin** & **Gelo**, **Totoy** and Family, **Peping** and Family, **Nena** and Family, brothers and sisters-in-law of the late

Vicente T. Diaz

wish to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Family, other relatives and friends who spent time with us, sent flowers, mass cards or in some other ways expressed love, concern and support in Papa Boy's coming home to our Creator and Father.

Thank You

BENITA CONTI DE GUIA

January 12, 1911 – August 7, 2005
Bolo, Bauan, Batangas

Peacefully joined our Lord and her late husband
MIGUEL M. DE GUIA, SR.

Her bereaved children : **Miguelito, Nora, Violeta (†), Perlita, Rolando, Estrella, Linda-Fe (†), Manolo and Victor**
Children-in-law : **Milagros, Galo, Manuel, Cresteta, Wilfredo, Rosemarie and Maria Theresa**
Grandchildren : **Angeo, Rommel (†), Mhiren, Marilyn, Gemma, Noren, Carol, Jon-jon, Michael, Botbot, Kat-kat, Kyla, Ghia, Teresa, Alyssa, Nikki and Matt**
Great grandchild : **Myca**

Relatives and friends request your masses and prayers for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Bolo, Bauan, Batangas.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 14, after the 1 p.m. mass at the Holy Family Parish, Bolo, Bauan, Batangas.

"...the Lord is my shepherd,
there is nothing I shall want..."

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

Our Beloved

CESAR LIMJAP PIO RODA

(PMA Class '56)

Peacefully joined our Lord
on August 8, 2005 at the age of 73.

His loving wife **Lily**, children **Beth & Danny Chiong, Jojo & Ria, Mary Anne & Tom Cadiz, John & Anna**, and **Michelle**; grandchildren **Denise, Marie, Bernadette, Carlos, Julia, Tommy, Inna, Gabriel, Katrina & Kyle**; sister **Concepcion Teodoro**; brothers **Rading & Dr. Claro Pio Roda**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Jerome Emilliani Church, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

On August 13, 2005, his remains will be laid to rest in his crypt after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the St. James Church, Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City.

The Board of Trustees
and the
Daughters of Saint Augustine (DSA),
Fatima Center for Human Development (FACE)
together with her beloved brothers and sisters and in-laws
Inocencia and **Alfredo Guarin**,
Epifania (†) and **Melquiades** (†) **Magday**,
Francisca and **Carlos** (†) **Uy**, **Alejandro** and **Esmenia Baysa**,
Marcelina Baysa, and **Perigio** (†) and **Leticia Baysa**
and nephews and nieces,
deeply mourn the passing of

SISTER MA. LA SALETTE ERMITAÑO BAYSA, DSA

who peacefully joined her Creator on 03 August 2005.

Her remains lie in state at the Chapel of
Our Lady of Good Counsel,
Fatima Center, San Agustin, Iriga City.

Interment will be on 13 August 2005 (Saturday)
after the 2 p.m. Mass at the Fatima Center.

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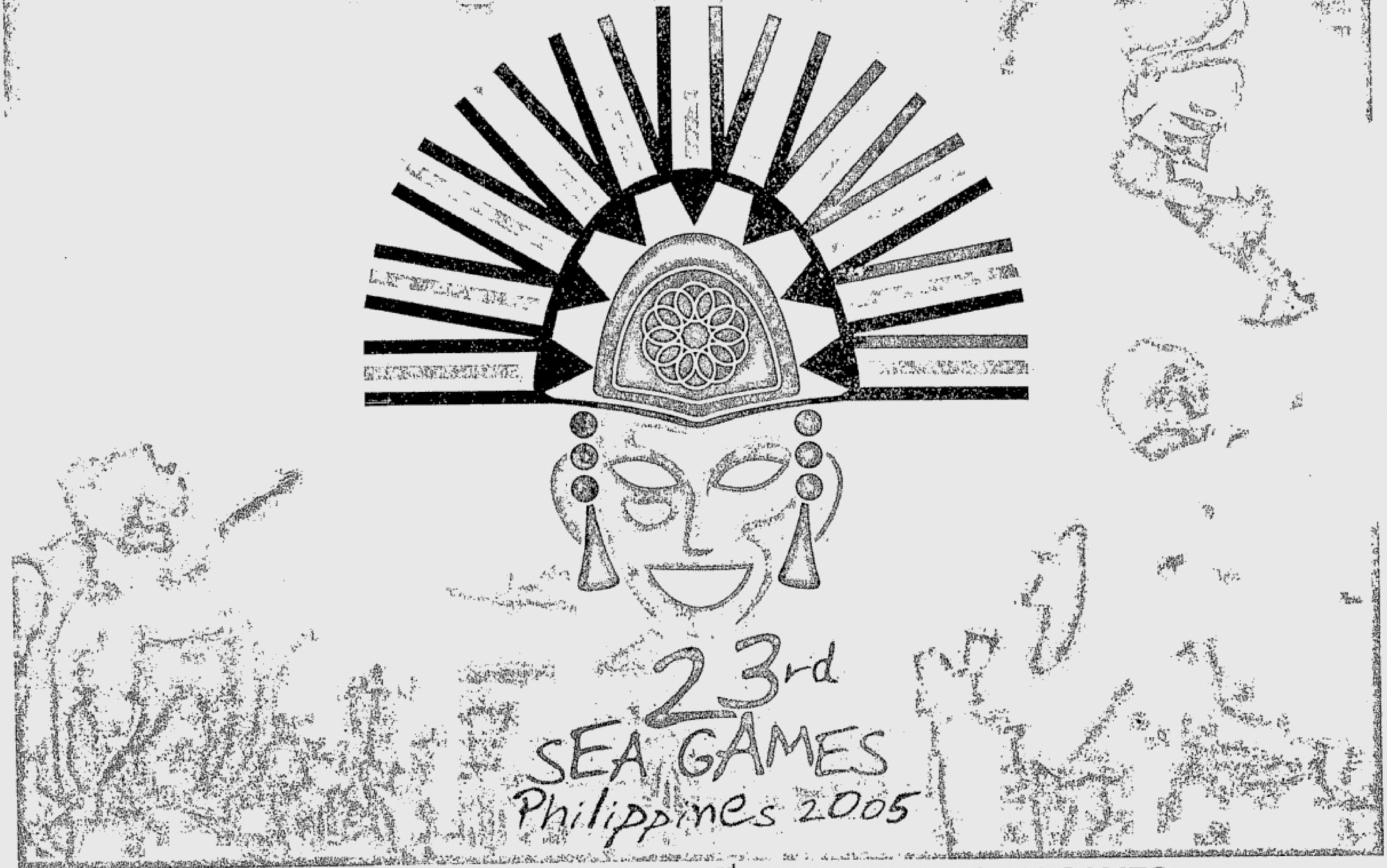

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Wednesday August 10, 2005

bi-rugo
Joey De Leon
Gladys Guevarra
and Mahal
ABC

WOW mali na MaLi!
NGAYONG SABADO 9PM

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Talk Ko 'To		Linya		Teledyaryo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)					
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Opkis	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Kampanerang Kuba	Crown Rose	Chi Fed Young	Yes Yes Show			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		Global Hoops				Sentro	Global Hoops					Big News	Dokyu		Battle At The Bridges	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Friends	Shaman King	Full Metal Alchemist	Full House		24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo	Atac Cat	Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iron Chef		Trading Spouses		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Keep up the Good Work w/ Joey Lina		Pangako Mo
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		MTV		Sing For Pesos			BYK 101	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite	Breaking Barriers	
SBN 21		New Life TV Shop		New Life TV Shop				EZ Shop				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Superfine Tv Shopping		Sheperds Voice	
Studio 23						Super Gals		Batman Beyond	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	Mutant X	C.S.I. (8:15 PM)		Las Vegas		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me
MTV Philippines		Making The Video Jessica These Boot	MTV Get Spotted			Hangin Out at MTV		TRL		MTV Play					MTV Lokal Parokya ni Edgar			MTV Play	VH1 Video Collections
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	Main Sail	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN				ESPN Great Outdoor Games				Pool/Snooker Rack 'Em Up 4		Asian X Games '05 Seoul		Sportscenter Asia	World Snooker Trick Shot Masters '05				Pro Billiards '04 Sudden Death 7-Ball NY USA		Sportscenter Asia
Sports Plus				Tour De France Highlights		FMX		Porsche md.10	Backyard 400 Highlights		Nopi Tunerversion	World's Greatest Auto Shows		Lock and Load	BD Alaska	Ultimate Fighting Championship			
Cinemax	Truman				Anna's Dream (4:40 PM)			Daredevil			Altered Species			Thrill Seekers			Single White Female		
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Agency II		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	Ladies Man	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Agency II		Love's Enduring Promise			Strong Medicine (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas F.B.Eye
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Lion King II, Simba's Pride			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Groove Squad Cheerleaders	
Discovery Channel		Science Mysteries		Science Frontiers		Unfolding Universe		Living With Tigers		Science Of Lance Armstrong		Hour China		Wild Tech		Japan's War In Colour		Hour Asia	
National Geographic		Showreal Asia		Going To Extremes		The Sea Hunters		Dogs With Jobs	Hayden Turner's Wildlife Challenge	Wow! Abdi's Story, return To Africa		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Showreal Asia		Going To Extremes	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Mucha Lucha!	Megas XLR	SD Gundam Force	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Johnny Bravo	Time Squad	Thundercats	Mucha Lucha!	Megas XLR
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/ What Planet Are You From	Rugrats	Hey Arnold	My Life As A Teenage Robot/ Right On Top	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	Fairly Odd Parents	U Pick Live: Spongebob Squarepants/ Drake And Josh/My Dad The Rock Star/ Viewer's Choice					All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Are You Afraid of the Dark?
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special What Hollywood Taught Us About Sex		Life Is Great With Brooke Burke	Life & Style		Clean House		Breathing Room	Genuine Article
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	One Tree Hill		Rockstar		JAG		Friends	One Tree Hill
AXN				Next Action Star		Ripley's Believe It or Not		PSI Factor (Season III)		Bassmaster		Maximum Exposure (Season II)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	CSI: Miami (Season 3)		CSI: NY (Season I)	
JackTV	Shorties Watching Shorties	South Park	Banzai	Wwe Raw				Filter	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Dr. Katz	Premium Blend	Shorties Watching Shorties	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Mad TV		The Sib Show	Street Smarts
ETC		Committed	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Complete Savages	What I Like About You	Veronica Mars		Last Comic Standing		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO			Cowboy Bebop: The Movie				That Championship Season				Vice Versa (7:25 PM)			Half Past Dead			Bring It On Again		
Star Movies			The Singing Detective				The Assassination File			The Challenge (7:15 PM)				Starship Troopers				The Distinguished Gentleman	
Cinema One		Kampanerang Kuba (Movie)				Ipagpatawad Mo				Pinay Pie			Persona	Kolehiyala (9:15 PM)				Time & Tide	
EWTN	The Sacraments Through The Ages	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Refurbishing The Soul	Faith Factor C	Story Keepers	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church And The Poor: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass Live		Angelus (9:15 PM)	One In Their Hearts: Holiness Of Priesthood	Deep Conversation: Deep Prayer	The Vortex: Seven Habits Of Champions	The Abundant Life	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat

alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes

Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado

Dito lang sa ABC

INQ TV

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Regional Office I
San Juan, La Union
Tel. No.: (072)242-59-09 & (072)700-25-79 Fax No.: (072) 242-59-07/08
Web site:www.nfa.gov.ph / E-mail Address:nfa-region1@sflu.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR TRUCKING/HAULING SERVICES

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested Trucking/Hauling Operators to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the supply of Trucking/Hauling Services for more or less 8,475 MT or 169,500 bags Imported Iron Fortified Rice covering the following specific routes:

A. From Poro Point to Staging Warehouses within La Union:

Lot No.	Receiving Warehouse	Volume (bags)	Trucking Reqmt (No.)	Load/Cap. Reqmt.	Approved Budget (ABC)
1	Poro Port to La Union Staging Warehouses, San Juan GID, Aringay Whse./ Caragay Whse./Agoo Whse./ Ober Whse.	169,500	30	12,000	1,186,500.00

B. From La Union Staging Warehouses to the different warehouses within Region I:

Lot No.	Receiving Warehouse	DIK	Volume (bags)	Trucking Reqmt (No.)	Load/Cap. Reqmt.	Approved Budget (ABC)
2	Bangued GID, Abra	138.0	3,000	2	800	45,960.00
3	Kadiwa Warehouse,Benguet	68.5	5,500	5	1,500	90,750.00
4	Loakan GID, Benguet	75.5	10,000	5	1,500	165,000.00
5	Laoag GID, Ilocos Norte	214.0	9,000	5	2,000	194,490.00
6	Dingras GID, Ilocos Norte	242.0	2,000	2	800	48,880.00
7	Bantay GID, Ilocos Sur	130.5	4,500	2	800	65,205.00
8	Tagudin FLGC, Ilocos Sur	44.3	2,000	2	800	11,380.00
9	Chua Warehouse, Ilocos Sur	60.5	2,500	2	800	17,700.00
10	Tan Warehouse Ilocos Sur	156.5	3,000	2	800	48,360.00
11	Sta. Maria Warehouse, Ilocos Sur	91.7	1,500	2	800	16,095.00
12	Binalonan Triplex, Eastern Pangasinan	82.0	20,000	3	1,200	191,800.00
13	Rosales I	110.0	20,000	3	1,200	244,200.00
14	Alaminos GID, Western Pangasinan	132.0	15,000	3	1,200	219,750.00
15	Kazenbar Warehouse, Western Pangasinan	85.2	44,000	6	2,400	438,680.00
16	Ferrer II Warehouse, Western Pangasinan	107.2	10,000	2	800	119,000.00

Interested Trucking/Hauling Operators may bid in any or all specified/preferred destinations.
The Schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

Activity	Date
1. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	August 3-17, 2005 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	August 18, 2005 (3:00 PM.)
3. Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	August 30, 2005 (3:00 PM)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P2,500.00.

The pre-bid conference and bidding proper shall be conducted at the NFA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NFA Office Building, San Juan, La Union. All Trucking/Hauling Operators interested to participate in the bidding must be registered/accredited with NFA. Interested bidders who are not NFA-Accredited Trucking/Hauling Operators and/or whose Registration had already expired may still participate provided they shall apply for accreditation/renewal at NFA Region I not later than August 15, 2005.

The eligibility of prospective bidders shall be determined using simple "Pass/Fail criteria and shall be considered as either "Eligible" or "Ineligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Passed" for all the requirements, he shall be considered "Eligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Failed" in any one of the requirements, he shall be considered "Ineligible".

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously two (2) envelopes, Envelope A containing the eligibility requirements and Envelope B containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instruction to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract be bid must at least be 50% of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND/OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Gloria Dacian at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union or at Tel. Nos. (072)-242-59-09 and (072)-700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO**
Asst. Regional Manager & RBAC Chairman

(PDI - Aug. 6 & 10, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills
City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines 1554
CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF :

ACTIVE REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION : REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES
X--------------------------------------X

NOTICE AND ORDER

Notice is hereby given that on July 22, 2005, a registration statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of **ACTIVE REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** for the registration of One Hundred Twenty (120) Timeshare Membership Certificates at a price ranging from One Million Pesos (P1,000,000.00) to Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00).

According to the papers/documents presented, the following persons are the directors/officers of the corporation:

Name	Position
ANTONIO A. TURALBA, Sr.	Chairman
MA. CRISTINA V. TURALBA	Vice-Chairman/Director
ANTONIO V. TURALBA, Jr.	President
ANTONELLA T. ABDON	Director/Treasurer
ANJEANETTE T. FUENTEBELLA	Director
RENE J. KATIGBAK	Corporate Secretary

Said registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business, hours and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director

(PDI – August 10, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Office of the Mayor
Santander, Cebu

NOTICE / INVITATION TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that the office of the Mayor of the Municipality of Santander, Santander, Cebu has received an Unsolicited Proposal from Termlink Inc., 32 A Rainbow Village, Kinasang-an, Pardo, Cebu City for the Construction of Passenger Terminal and a High and Low Ramp Docking Facility for Roro Vessels at the Santander Municipal Wharf, located at Talisay, Santander, Cebu. Copy of the said proposal is available at the Office of the Municipal Mayor, Santander, Cebu.

The said wharf was the subject matter of Civil Case No. OS-02-97 entitled "Municipality of Santander, Cebu vs. Spouses Crisologo and Priscilla Abines," decided by the Regional Trial Court, Branch 62, Oslob, Cebu in favor of the Municipality of Santander, Cebu which decision was appealed before the Court of Appeals nineteenth (19th) Division and docketed therein as Case No. CA G.R. CV No. 81584.

Relative thereto, any and all persons interested in the said undertaking are hereby INVITED to submit their COMPARATIVE and COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS to the Office of the Mayor Santander, Cebu within fifteen (15) days from August 17, 2005, the date of the last publication of this Notice/Invitation, or until September 1, 2005.

All proposals relative to the said undertaking will be evaluated by the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) on September 2, 2005 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the Santander Municipal Session Hall, Santander, Cebu.

(Sgd.) WILSON S. WENCESLAO
Municipal Mayor

(PDI – August 3, 10 & 17, 2005)

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2. Web Developer / Designer

Qualifications:
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If you have the qualifications mentioned above, apply now at
Unit 23-B Chatham House Condominium,
Valero corner Rufino St.,
Salcedo Village, Makati
or e-mail your resumé with photo to
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For inquiries, call (02) 843-5377
and look for **Frianne/Sara.**

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319 G. Puyat st., Makati City

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION
North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
P.O. Box 70, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City
TIN 000-784-336-000

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids will be accepted and thereafter opened on September 7, 2005 at the time set hereunder, at the Training Room, Main Building, Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, for the sale of the following SRA lots.

A. SRA Commercial Lots at Sugartowne, Batasan Hills, Quezon City

LOCATION	TCT	LOT AREA	COST/SQ.M.	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
Blk 29, Lot 1A	238385	380 sq.m.	Php 6,000.00	Php 2,280,000.00
Blk 15, Lot 38	133294	779 sq.m.	6,500.00	5,063,500.00
Blk 33	133688	2,499 sq.m.	6,000.00	14,994,000.00
		3,658 sq.m.		Php 22,337,500.00

B. Lot No. 2293-A in front of Villa Del Sol at Barangay Magliman, San Fernando, Pampanga

LOCATION	TCT	LOT AREA	COST/SQ.M.	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
Lot No. 2293-A	96098-R	20,000 sq.m.	Php 500.00	Php 10,000,000.00

Bid forms including the Rules and Regulations and other documents pertinent to the sale of lots at Php1,000.00 per bid per individual lot shall be issued by the Secretariat, SRA Disposal Committee starting August 26, 2005.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	DATE OF ACTIVITY
Issuance of Letter of Intent and Prequalification Forms	August 11-19, 2005
Deadline for the submission of Letter of Intent and Prequalification Requirements	August 22, 2005
Issuance of Bid Forms and the Rules and Regulations on the sale of lots	August 26, 2005
Pre-Bid Conference	August 31, 2005 9:00 AM
Public Bidding	September 7, 2005 9:00 AM

The purpose of the Pre-Bidding Conference is to address issues regarding the disposal of the lots at the SRA, Training Room, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

All bids must be accompanied by a deposit either in cash or Manager's/Cashier's check equivalent to 10% of the total bid price.

For inquiries, please call:

The Disposal Committee Secretariat
Tel. No. 929-6837

The SRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality or defect therein, and to accept any or all offers that may be considered most advantageous to the SRA.

(Sgd.) AIDA F. IGNACIO
Chairperson, Disposal Committee

(PDI - Aug. 10, 11 & 12, 2005)

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
BFO Building, Ortigas Avenue cor. EDSA, Mandaluyong City 1501
Website: www.poea.gov.ph E-mail: info@poea.gov.ph
Hotlines: 722-1144, 722-1155

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 08
Series of 2005

TO : ALL CONCERNED POEA LICENSED RECRUITMENT AGENCIES
SUBJECT : MANDATORY PARTICIPATION IN THE POEA CONTRACTS ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION SYSTEM

Pursuant to the thrust of the Administration to streamline the procedures on the documentation of OFWs in order to facilitate their deployment, the agencies listed herewith which is based on the list of top deploying agencies in 2004, shall be required to participate in the POEA program on electronic submission of employment contracts for processing (e-submit) before 2 January 2006.

Thereafter, the documentation of workers hired by the listed agencies shall be made only through the e-submit system, unless technical concerns occur, in which case the documentation of the workers shall be prioritized in the regular procedure for processing of workers.

Agencies not in the attached list shall be required to participate in the program within 2006.

Participants to the e-submit program shall be covered by POEA Memorandum Circular No. 25 series of 2003 on Guidelines on the Contracts e-Submission for Landbased Recruitment Agencies.

For strict compliance.

(Sgd.) ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS-BALDOZ
Administrator

19 July 2005
(PDI – August 10, 2005)

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Department of Labor and Employment
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Website: www.poea.gov.ph E-mail: info@poea.gov.ph
Hotlines: 722-1144, 722-1155

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 09
Series of 2005

TO : ALL CONCERNED
SUBJECT : Guidelines on the Recruitment and Deployment of Filipino Household Workers to Singapore
DATE : 26 July 2005

Pursuant to the Administration's deregulation thrust and continuing program to simplify and streamline procedures on the documentation of overseas Filipino workers, the following guidelines are hereby prescribed for the recruitment and deployment of household workers to Singapore:

I. GENERAL POLICY

Only employment agencies which are duly licensed by the Singapore government shall be qualified to be registered by POEA as principals/employers of Filipino household workers.

II. PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SINGAPORE PRINCIPALS/EMPLOYERS AT THE PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS LABOR OFFICE (POLO)

The following documents shall be submitted by the Singapore employment agencies to the POLO at the Philippine Embassy:

1. Agency profile with ACRA business profile
2. Notarized Affidavit of Undertaking by the Singapore employment agency
3. Bond Certificate of a banker's guarantee of S$5,000 by the Singapore agency
4. Valid license of the principal issued by the Singapore Ministry of Manpower
5. Valid POEA license of the Philippine recruitment agency.

III. REGISTRATION OF SINGAPORE PRINCIPALS/EMPLOYERS

The following requirements shall be submitted to POEA for the initial registration of Singapore principals/employers:

1. Special Power of Attorney (SPA), duly verified by the POLO
2. Manpower request duly verified by the POLO
3. Valid license of the principal from the Singapore Ministry of Manpower
4. Principal's Pre-Qualification Certificate from the POLO

IV. RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

Renewal of registration of principals/employers shall be approved upon submission of a valid verified SPA and Manpower Request and the license from the Singapore Ministry of Manpower.

V. DOCUMENTATION OF WORKERS

Processing of Agency-hired Workers. Employment contracts of household workers hired through Philippine recruitment agencies shall be processed at POEA upon submission of the following documents:

1. Request for Processing (RFP)
2. Worker's Information Sheet
3. Individual Standard Employment Contract duly verified by the POLO and authenticated by the Philippine Embassy
4. Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) Certificate

Processing of Name Hires. Household workers shall be documented as name hires through the POEA Name Hire facility upon presentation of the documentary requirements for name hires including a verified and authenticated individual employment contract.

Processing of Returning Workers. Previously undocumented workers going back to the same employer shall be processed as a returning worker upon submission of the documentary requirements for processing of returning workers, including a verified individual employment contract.

VI. REPEALING CLAUSE

All previous issuances inconsistent with this Circular are hereby deemed amended and modified.

For immediate compliance.

(Sgd.) ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS-BALDOZ
Administrator

(PDI – August 10, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF ONE-YEAR GENERATION OF BUNKER-C WASTE OIL

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : August 30, 2005 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Bldg.-1, Grd. Floor, NPC-HO, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the one-year generation of waste Bunker C for the following NPC power barges.

Power Barge and Location	Minimum Bid Price
1. PB-101, Osmeña Wharf, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu	P 11.00/liter
2. PB-102, Brgy. Obrero, Iloilo City, Panay Island	P 11.00/liter
3. PB-103, Brgy. Botongan, Estancia Iloilo Province, Panay Island	P 11.00/liter
4. PB-104, Brgy. Calumpang, General Santos City, Mindanao	P 10.65/liter

Participating bidders must be accredited waste oil treater or processor by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Environment Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) and ready to present their valid Permit to Operate and Environment Compliance Certificate.

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S / CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE OFFER.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2004 ORIGINAL OR XEROX COPY)
3. TAX CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE (VALID UP TO DATE OF BIDDING)

PARTIES WHO WISH TO SECURE BID FORMS MUST PRESENT VALID IDENTIFICATION CARD LIKE DRIVER'S LICENSE, GSIS ID, SSS ID, POSTAL ID, PASSPORT, PRC ID AND COMPANY ID.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. Alfonso D. Alday, Manager, Warehousing, Inventory, Traffic and Asset Disposal Division (WITADD) at Bldg. 1, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C. or call telephone no. 922-8431. **Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 PM, August 29, 2005.**

For the Materials and Management Department

(Sgd.) FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI–Aug. 8, 9 & 10, 2005)

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BUSINESS

5-year T-bond rate up 10.8%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COST of the government's five-year borrowing rose to 10.817 percent during yesterday's debt auction, marked by over-subscription from banks that wanted to reduce their high level of liquidity.

The new 10.817-percent rate for the five-year Treasury bond was 7.4 basis points higher than the 10.743 percent recorded during its previous auction on July 19.

The high volume of bids indicated that the market is still much awash in cash, traders said.

But the increase in the rate of the five-year debt instrument may also indicate that the banks could be awaiting another investment opportunity in the form of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) the government is expected to issue, traders said.

"[The banks] were bidding but, at the same time, they were exercising caution in making their bids by asking for higher rates," said a trader from a commercial bank. "They were not bidding aggressively."

Volume of bids reached P8.375 billion, more than double the government's debt offering of only P4 billion. The Bureau of Treasury accepted P4 billion worth of bids.

Last Monday, Treasury bill rates rose slightly across all maturities. But volume of bids were high especially on the one-year bill, which attracted P5.75 billion worth of bids compared with the government's debt offering of only P2 billion per T-bill tenor.

The 91-day, 182- and 364-day T-bills fetched rates of 5.622 percent, 7.455 percent and 8.433 percent, respectively.

Hike in water rates sought

By Christine A. Gaylican

WATER concessionaire Manila Water Company Inc. (MWCI) is seeking to raise its rates next month by 5 to 7 centavos per cubic meter to cover for the recent peso fluctuations and the servicing of old debts incurred by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

According to Virgilio Rivera Jr., MWCI's group director for regulatory affairs, the east zone concessionaire has already submitted its petition to the MWSS Regulatory Office to increase its foreign currency differential adjustment (FCDA) now pegged at 38 centavos.

The FCDA is the tariff mechanism approved by MWSS and the National Economic and Development Authority in order to ease the impact of peso fluctuations affecting the foreign denominated loans of the Metro Manila water concessionaires.

The FCDA mechanism is passed on to consumers. MWCI, and its counterpart in the west zone Maynilad Water Services Inc., also pay for the concession fees.

Rivera said that the MWSS Regulatory Office is still evaluating the MWCI proposal. The firm hopes that the proposal would be approved and the new rates applied in the September billing.

According to Rivera, MWCI needs the tariff adjustment to settle part of the MWSS' 10-billion yen debt to the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, which is soon to fall due.

The payment of the old debt is part of the concession agreement between MWCI and the government.

"We have recommended that a confirmation of the Bureau of Treasury be engaged to determine foreign exchange gains and losses for the amortization of the JBIC loans," Rivera told the INQUIRER during the concessionaire's 8th anniversary held at the MWCI's main office in Quezon City.

Sources at the MWSS Regulatory Office yesterday confirmed that MWCI did submit a petition. The sources said that officials are now discussing whether a rate adjustment is needed.

As for Maynilad Water Services Inc., the FCDA adjustment is also applicable to them even if the west zone concessionaire has not filed their petition because of the changes in management now taking place in the firm.

Meanwhile, MWCI is in the final stage of acquiring the P1.86-billion Carmen Bulk-Water supply project in Cebu.

The project would supply an additional 50,000 cubic meters of potable water daily to Metro Cebu, company officials said.

The memorandum of understanding between MWCI and the Metro Cebu Water District (MCWD) could stand as a draft project contract, said Sherisa Nuesa, MWCI's chief finance officer.

But the Metro Cebu Water District, citing rules pertaining to the build-operate-transfer (BOT) law, would still have to subject MWCI's bid to a competitive price challenge in the second half of the year before the local government agency could award the contract.

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MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

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Isuzu gives something back to nature

By Charles E. Buban

WHILE it would take a little while before we could enjoy the diesel-electric hybrid technology that Isuzu has developed [yes, the Japanese automaker has just added a new diesel hybrid truck to its lineup of Elf low-pollution light-duty trucks], the company is doing its part in making our country a greener and healthier place to live in.

Just last week, Isuzu Philippines Corp. (IPC) headed to Atimonan, Quezon, to establish a man-made forest strip in two designated protected areas to celebrate its 8th inaugural anniversary.

Dubbed "ISUlong ang Kalikasan!" (Nurture Nature!), IPC donated an initial 10,000 narra seedlings, which will be planted at the reservation areas of Sitio Sapinit—Sta. Catalina and Barangay Silangang Malikboy.

THE BLESSING of the commemorative marker highlights the signing of the MOU between IPC and Quezon provincial officers.

"IPC chose the province of Quezon because we want to help the community here, which was among the areas declared under state of calamity last December," IPC president Yoshifumi Komura reveals.

Quezon province was hardest hit—with about a thousand people killed and hundreds missing—when three typhoons hit Luzon one after the other leaving a wide swathe of devastation.

"Establishing a forest reserve perfectly complements Isuzu's main global thrust this year to institute what we call the Safety, Economy, Environment-friendliness (SEE) technology which encompasses all Isuzu endeavors from product development, customer relations and corporate responsibility," Komura explains.

He adds that all activities of Isuzu worldwide are geared to meet the need for safety, economy and the protection of the environment.

Partnership

For this particular project, IPC partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (headed by its regional executive director Antonio Principe) and province officials, particularly Vice Gov. Jay-Jay Suarez, and Protected Area Management Board director Diony Dapla.

The parties involved signed a memorandum of understanding wherein IPC transfers the care and stewardship of the donated narra seedlings to the provincial government, through the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) and the PAMB.

The Penro and the PAMB are tasked to take care of the planted seedlings and ensure that no trees in the reserve area will ever be cut or used for commercial purposes.

In the same MOU, IPC will also donate another 5,000 narra seedlings, this time in the towns of Infanta and Real (the epicenter of the devastation in the province) and will help the PAMB with its tree nursery project in the next two years as part of the "ISUlong ang Kalikasan!" program.

Komura assures that even the next generation will benefit from this IPC reforestation effort.

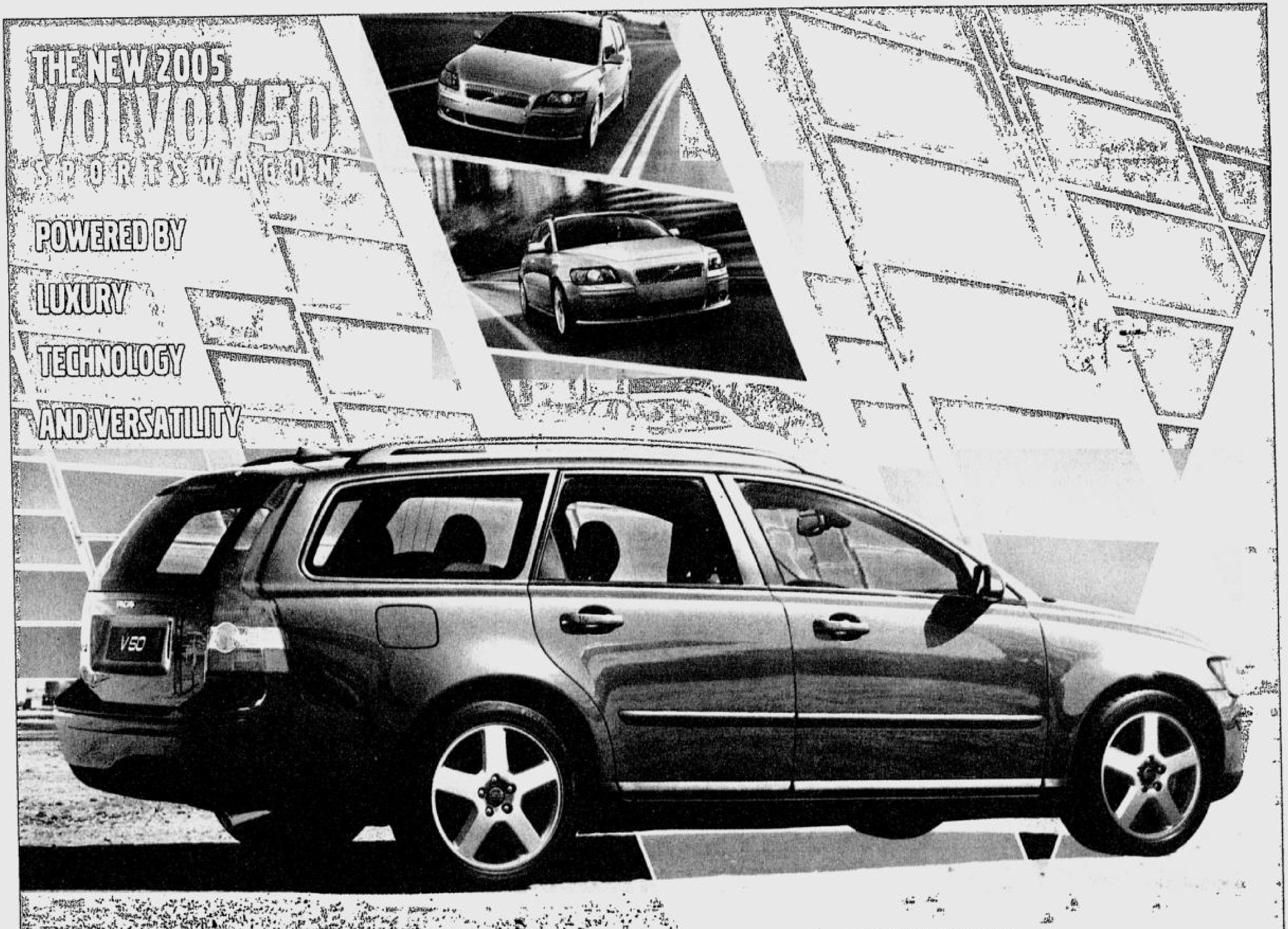
ENSURING a green future, IPC's VP for corporate business Arthur Balmadrid (left) and president Yoshifumi Komura together with DENR regional executive director Antonio Principe (right) lead the ceremonial tree-planting in Atimonan.

Not the first time

This is not the first time that IPC embarked on a project geared toward helping the environment, reveals IPC public relations manager Timmy Naval.

She relates that last year, IPC helped the fishing community of Laguna, in partnership with the Laguna Lake Development Authority, by seeding Laguna de Bay with 10,000 tilapia fingerlings.

"Aside from the tilapia seeding project, IPC also donated a garbage trap facility to help keep a vital river flowing and free of garbage in Barangays Macabling and Tagapo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna," she shares.



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VOLVO
for life

Volvo taps women to please most demanding clients

By Tessa R. Salazar

(Second of two parts)

IT was in 2001 when an idea to give an all-women team in Volvo a free hand to develop a concept car was born. The goal was to please the most demanding Volvo customers of all: women, while at the same not relegating its male customers to "sleep on the couch," so to speak. Thus, the plan to design what is now called YCC, or "Your Concept Car," was approved by Volvo's top executives in 2002.

In its two-year development, every aspect of the car's design and production had been overseen by women, a first in the automotive industry. Aside from the all-female project management team, up to 400 more women from the company were tapped to contribute their ideas to the project.

Even for a long time prior to this gender-breaking project, female empowerment has been an everyday occurrence at Volvo, a company which has always been known to make vehicle safety its paramount consideration and selling point.

Volvo, a division of Ford, employs 28,159 worldwide, 20 percent of whom are women holding various positions.

Fifty-four percent of Volvo buyers in the United States are women, and about 14 percent in Europe. That ratio is growing as Volvo's customer base grows.

In 2001 in the Philippines there were only 386,958 female licensed drivers compared to 2,548,544 male licensed drivers. This is just 13 percent.

Engine, transmission

There were comments about the YCC being overladen with technological features that it might have taken the "fun and instinct" out of driving. The Volvo team countered by stating the obvious power of the 215-hp, five-cylinder Volvo PZEV engine, which, at the same time, gives great consideration to the environment as it complies with the toughest emissions standards in certain US "green" states such as California.

The six-speed powershift gearbox with dual wet clutch transmission ensures gear changes are always at the right revs. The "fun" and "guiltless" part of driving this car, said the Volvo team, would be the smooth drive and lower fuel consumption.

An Integrated Starter-Generator would shut off the engine when the car is not in motion, but would start the engine up instantly with the help of an electric motor, in the process adding 10 percent to the fuel mileage.

Big letdown

But here's the big letdown for those who like to pop the hood and display their cars' engines at the mall parking lot. The YCC was designed without an easy-open hood. Instead, an automatic diagnostic system shows the schedules of Volvo servicing. This includes a warning system to remind owners when to bring the car to the Volvo shop for an oil change. Thus, Volvo sees no need for drivers to open the hood anytime in-between servicing.

And what about the washer fluids? A capless ball valve is in place to put in the washer fluid.

Short wings

The modern-look gull-wing doors did raise some concerns, topmost of which is their ability to open fully in cramped parking spaces. Andersson and Rosen demonstrated that the doors jutted out only 60 cm (about 2 feet) from the car, just about the same as conventional car doors.

In an earlier road tour, a 9-month pregnant driver showed how she could easily slide in and out of the driver's seat with the help of the car's gull-wing door and "ergovision" system.

A 'heart' for details

Inside the YCC, aside from the "ponytail" depression at the headrest, more details betrayed the true "heart" of the designers. A nifty storage for an umbrella is right at the driver's door. Just beside the space where the handbrake and gear levers should have been located are storage spaces for a laptop and a handbag instead. The parking brake is already electronic, and the gear lever is situated right by the steering wheel.

Here's more. Since bags are more common than passengers in the rear seats, these are folded up until someone needs them.

Not pleased

The interior design of the car, Rosen admitted, unabashedly revealed colors and trims strongly influenced by home interior designs, and the materials were not "hidden" by shiny enamels. To this approach, some male observers were not pleased.

One Malaysian aircraft design engineer remarked, out of earshot of the Volvo team, that he "hated" it. "It feels like you're inside a kitchen," he murmured.

Unperturbed by the mixed reactions, the Volvo team stressed the upsides: Stains would no longer be a problem for seat pads. These are disposable and available in eight colors. Each color has a matching carpet, inspired by a home interior design.

The unhappy Malaysian engineer does have a consolation, though. Volvo said the YCC concept car would remain a concept car, with some of its "more favorable" features added gradually onto other Volvo models in the future.

The INQUIRER asked Andersson later if the YCC reportedly cost $3 million to design and develop. She declined to comment. She also refused to comment on talks that a production version of the car would be available for $65,000.

Though it is the first car designed by an entirely female team, the YCC is not the first car designed for women. This latest effort brings to mind Dodge's La Femme of the '50s, another concept car that had swiveling seats for easy entry and exit for a mini-skirted driver.

(In the first part last week, the last sentence should have read: "She's out for lunch, goes to the hairdresser, goes to the day-care and then she's home. So women park more," she said.)

The other 3

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

BEFORE finally being able to get my hands on the X3 2.0d, BMW Philippines politely asked if I could sit through a presentation of sorts—one that would explain the X3 product in earnest and highlight all that the vehicle delivered to customers and owners. The spiffy presentation on the large flat screen monitor was clear, precise and to the point.

Essentially, this was a premium vehicle to be sold to an obviously upwardly mobile target market that was supposed to be young at the same time. Older more established types are more likely to buy X5s or helicopters, if I'm not mistaken.

The presentation went on for 10 minutes and delved slightly into a traction control system and a hill descent function—items that are basically supposed to give the X3 off-road credibility. This even went on to stress that the X3 was a sport activity vehicle (SAV) instead of a usual sport utility vehicle (SUV)—a difference that is well argued for a vehicle priced as such. This was pure marketing syrup being slathered on by some of the best.

To be honest, I really didn't listen or pay much attention to the briefing. As I sat in that pretty corner office, my urgent goal was to get the X3 out of the basement parking lot, out of the Makati CBD and onto some wide, open roads. I wanted to know what the X3 2.0d delivered to those of us who actually drive.

2 experiences

My excitement was heightened by two very specific experiences in the recent past, and both left me in anticipation of the drive that was to come. During Coty (Car of the Year) testing last year, I had free reign of the 2.5-liter inline six gasoline X3 at the "secret" closed test site at Eagle Ridge in Cavite. It handled beautifully and impressed quite a few who drove it—namely members of three generations of rally drivers and co-drivers.

I would also be having a reunion of sorts with the engine, as the X3 2.0d is powered by a two-liter, common rail, turbo power plant that is somewhat similar to that of the gray E90 320d I'd had a fling with at the New 3 Series launch in Spain. As wingman of a black 330i, our loose element of two E90s sometimes broke formation, but rarely lost contact, with the diesel's advantage in torque often making up for the gasoline's edge in horsepower.

On paper, the numbers that are displayed by the X3 2.0d are not "category busting," to use a term oft abused these days. A decent 150 bhp is to be had from this engine, but more importantly it comes with 236 ft lb of torque, more pulling power than any 2.0 inline four executive sedan. The performance is surprising to say the least with a factory-claimed sprint to 100 kph in about 10 seconds, much of which is owed to the 6-speed manual transmission that this X3 comes with.

6 forward gears

Yes, you heard me right, this baby comes with 6 forward gears and a clutch pedal—something that most would say is out of place at this price point. For those hardcore few who still prefer a stick to an autobox, the motion of raking through the X3 2.0d's gears will definitely be a toe-curling experience.

First gear is best used just to take off from a dead start. Second and third gears are where this gearbox truly shines, the g forces kick in when the turbo does—around sometime above 3,000 rpm. Fourth and fifth gears allow a little more acceleration once already at speed, perfect for larking about on an elevated highway or two. Sixth is sort of an overdrive gear that would be of great use if one wanted to cruise above 160 kph, perfect speed for the slow lane of the Autobahn's fast sections. Terminal speed tops out just under 200 kph as stated by manufacturer's data and not by actual testing, I swear.

Readers may be asking what kind of daredevil/idiot would attempt these speeds in an SAV or SUV? Obviously because of the higher ride height and softer suspension the X3 would be dangerously unstable at such illegal speeds, right? The answer is a flat-out no. Passengers' number one gripe about this car is actually every X3 drive's best friend. This vehicle comes with a rather stiff suspension for a "lifestyle" vehicle; this firmness may annoy at low speeds but this helps immensely once the going goes above 100 kph.

A true sporting diesel

With more aggressive compression and compliant rebound settings for its suspension, the X3 stays true when the driver needs it most. Coupled the marquee associated traction control system DSC (Dynamic Stability Control), the X3 can be driven closer to the edge with the confidence that you will be reeled back to safety by software, computers and servos. Don't get me wrong, it probably won't outrun and outturn a similarly powered 3 Series sedan, but in the hands of a skilled driver the X3 2.0d might just give the competition a run for its product identity.

In the end, the intricate marketing strategy of the X3 does not work its magic on me. If the car happens to be in your budget and meets your motoring needs better than a sedan, wagon or hatchback, then by all means, choose an SAV or SUV or soft-roader. No illusions of brand lifestyle here ladies and gentlemen; it is the basic car that should matter.

Arrival at any destination can be unheralded just as long as the drive getting there is memorable. The X3, particularly the 2.0d, delivers such a surprisingly impressive motoring experience. It is a fundamentally good car, a true sporting diesel that reminds us of how fun it is to really drive.

TOYOTA Revo

Orphaned cars

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE DICTIONARY defines the word "orphan" as a child whose parents are dead. But when it comes to an orphaned car, its parent company—the manufacturer—is not necessarily dead. Rather, the parent company stops producing or selling that car mainly because it failed to meet sales targets. And the parent company usually replaces the orphaned car with another, presumably more marketable, car.

The subject of orphaned cars came to my mind when Ford Group Philippines held a press preview of the 1.8-liter Ford Focus compact sedan last month. Will the arrival of the multi-awarded Focus signal the phase-out in the Philippines of the slow-selling Ford Lynx, which in 2001 was being sold in Thailand and Australia as the Mazda Laser?

In the evening of the same day that the Ford Focus was previewed, Honda Cars Philippines Inc. unveiled the 1.5-liter VTEC Jazz. The launching of a more powerful Jazz made me wonder whether its 1.3-liter variant would be orphaned soon. After all, HCPI stopped selling the 2.0-liter Accord after the 3.0-liter V6 Accord was introduced in August 2004—much to the chagrin of those who had bought the 2.0 Accord.

Disappeared

In other words, a car model itself may not be orphaned, but the introductory, underpowered version of it may be. Thus the 2.0-liter Ford Escape compact SUV disappeared from the market after its 2.3-liter and 3.0-liter V6 versions showed up. Ditto the 2.0-liter Toyota Camry after the 2.4- and 3.0-liter V6 Camrys became available.

But to many people, the most shocking orphaning was that of the Tamaraw/Revo, Toyota's best-selling product and the nation's most popular Asian utility vehicle. On Valentine's Day this year, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. held the line-off ceremony of the Innova MPV (multipurpose vehicle), the Revo's successor, and announced that the last Revo rolled off TMPC's assembly line on Dec. 18, 2004 (see "Goodbye, Revo; Hello, Innova" Feb. 23, 2005 "On the Road").

If you had just acquired a Revo in 2004, how would you feel? Like an orphan yourself, no doubt. Revo owners have reason to worry about the continuing availability of Revo parts as the years go by. But that is the price of progress. The Innova, one of Toyota's Innovative International Multipurpose Vehicles (IMV), is much more technologically advanced and stronger than the aging Revo.

No more Echo

There was consternation when TMPC stopped selling the Echo, a funky little imported CBU (completely built unit) designed for but not quite accepted by the X Generation. The Vios, which looks like a smaller Corolla Altis, replaced the Echo and is selling more briskly than the Echo ever did.

NISSAN Verita

Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. (NMPI) has orphaned some cars, too, to cut its losses. The unlamented Nissan Vanette minivan vanished from dealers' showrooms many years ago and has been replaced by the Serena. The Nissan Terrano SUV also dropped out of sight long ago, although you still see a few Terrano orphans on the road.

Like the Terrano, the Nissan Verita subcompact sedan, which is a CBU, was pulled out of the market but was not replaced with another model by NMPI. CBU models are at greater risk of being orphaned than CKD (completely knocked down), locally assembled models should sales prove disappointing. After all, no big investment was made in putting up or retooling an assembly plant just to produce that model.

Other orphans

Aside from the Toyota Echo and Nissan Verita, the orphaned CBUs include the Chevrolet Cassia (a.k.a. Suzuki Baleno), Volkswagen Polo, two Subarus (Forester and Impreza WRX), two Opels (Vectra and Omega), Suzuki Esteem and the Ford F-150. In the case of the Ford F-150, however, its phaseout was due not to poor sales, but to a new tariff set-up that made selling it here unprofitable.

Meanwhile, whatever happened to the Kia Pride subcompact, the Mazda 323 and 626 sedans and Mitsubishi Space Wagon? They have been replaced by the Kia Picanto the Mazda3 and Mazda6 and the Mitsubishi Grandis. It's not merely a matter of a change in nomenclature—the replacements are totally new cars that look snazzier and perform better.

The champion in outlasting all other vehicles, the one that appears to be in no danger of being orphaned, is the Mitsubishi L300 van. Capable of seating 12 passengers, this AUV-cum-minivan has remained unchanged for decades but is still selling well because it is priced much lower than other minivans.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A committee is a life form with six or more legs and no brain.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

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That tricycle—again

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

GOING north or south, travel will definitely become faster if the Tricycle Law is strictly enforced.

Alas, many town mayors are the first violators of the law. They allow tricycles to use highways with impunity, when the law is clear that tricycles are barred from using our highways.

Tricycle drivers are voters and mayors do not want to antagonize them, lest they lose their votes come election.

Thus, the tricycle has become a political issue rather than a road issue.

It sucks.

That's the government that we have today.

* * *

These days, you reach Lucena in about four hours. In the not so distant past, Lucena is only about an hour and a half ride. And Lucena from Makati is not even more than 150 km.

The tricycles on our highways, as always, are the culprits. They are the "king of the road" from Sto. Tomas, Batangas, to Sariaya, Quezon.

That's the government that we have today.

It sucks.

* * *

These days, too, you reach Baguio in about seven hours. In the not so distant past, Baguio is only about four hours. And Baguio from Balintawak is not even more than 220 km.

The tricycles on our highways, as always, are the culprits. They are the "king of the road" from Capas, Tarlac, to Sison, Pangasinan.

That's the government that we have today.

It sucks.

* * *

Each time I travel to either Pangasinan or Quezon—which has become very often these days since I love to plant seedlings in the country during the rainy season—I have yet to see a road sign in either McArthur Highway or Maharlika Highway declaring tricycles as off-limits on our national highways.

You talk of the countryside as the surefire power gunning up national progress, go plant denorado rice in the sand. Mayors will be the first to believe harvest time will commence in 45 days.

You talk of tricycles as not road risks, go listen to GMA's latest State of the Nation Address. Mayors, even governors, will say it's the best Sona ever delivered by the President since 2001.

Trapos will always listen to their fellow trapos, never to the people, never to their consciences.

That's the government that we have today.

It sucks.

* * *

Arlan Reyes of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines does wonders the natural way that's why he's become the envy of many even by his fiercest rivals from the motoring industry.

Just recently, he parks a Mitsubishi Strada 4x4 right in front of the house and says, "Enjoy it, Sir."

Always, he does it in style when it comes to dealing with Mitsubishi's friends, this guy Arlan who has become the top point-man of Mel Dizon and Froi Dytianquin for years now.

Well, the Strada 4x4, dubbed as the "power to move you," now comes with an electronically controlled automatic that is coupled to a part-time, 4-wheel drive with synchronizer so you can shift to 4WD on the fly. Its TPMS (tire pressure monitoring system) lets you monitor, in real time, the pressure and temperature of all tires, including spare. It warns you if there is a slow leak, fast leak or a sudden rise in the temperature through an audible and visible warning. It has the usual dashboard compass, a Mitsubishi signature, that I like very much.

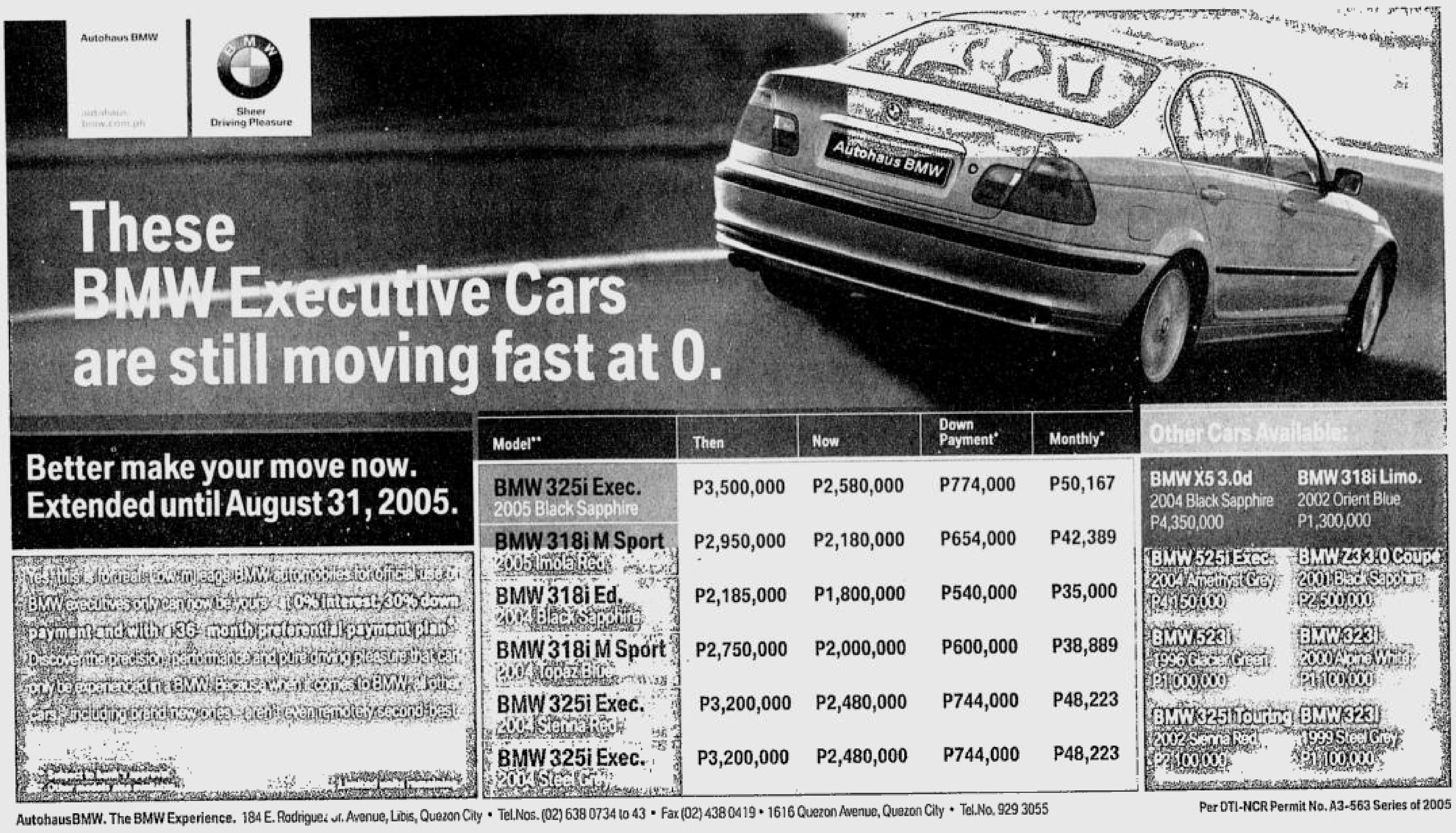
It is rugged yet refined, whether you are roughing it on a mountain trail, a country road, or cruising on an urban boulevard.

Yes Arlan, you are right. It's also fun driving it.

Ciao!

* * *

QUOTE ME. Cars are like women. They whine when you race them.



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BMW 318i Ed. 2004 Black Sapphire	P2,185,000	P1,800,000	P540,000	P35,000
BMW 318i M Sport 2004 Topaz Blue	P2,750,000	P2,000,000	P600,000	P38,889
BMW 325i Exec. 2004 Sienna Red	P3,200,000	P2,480,000	P744,000	P48,223
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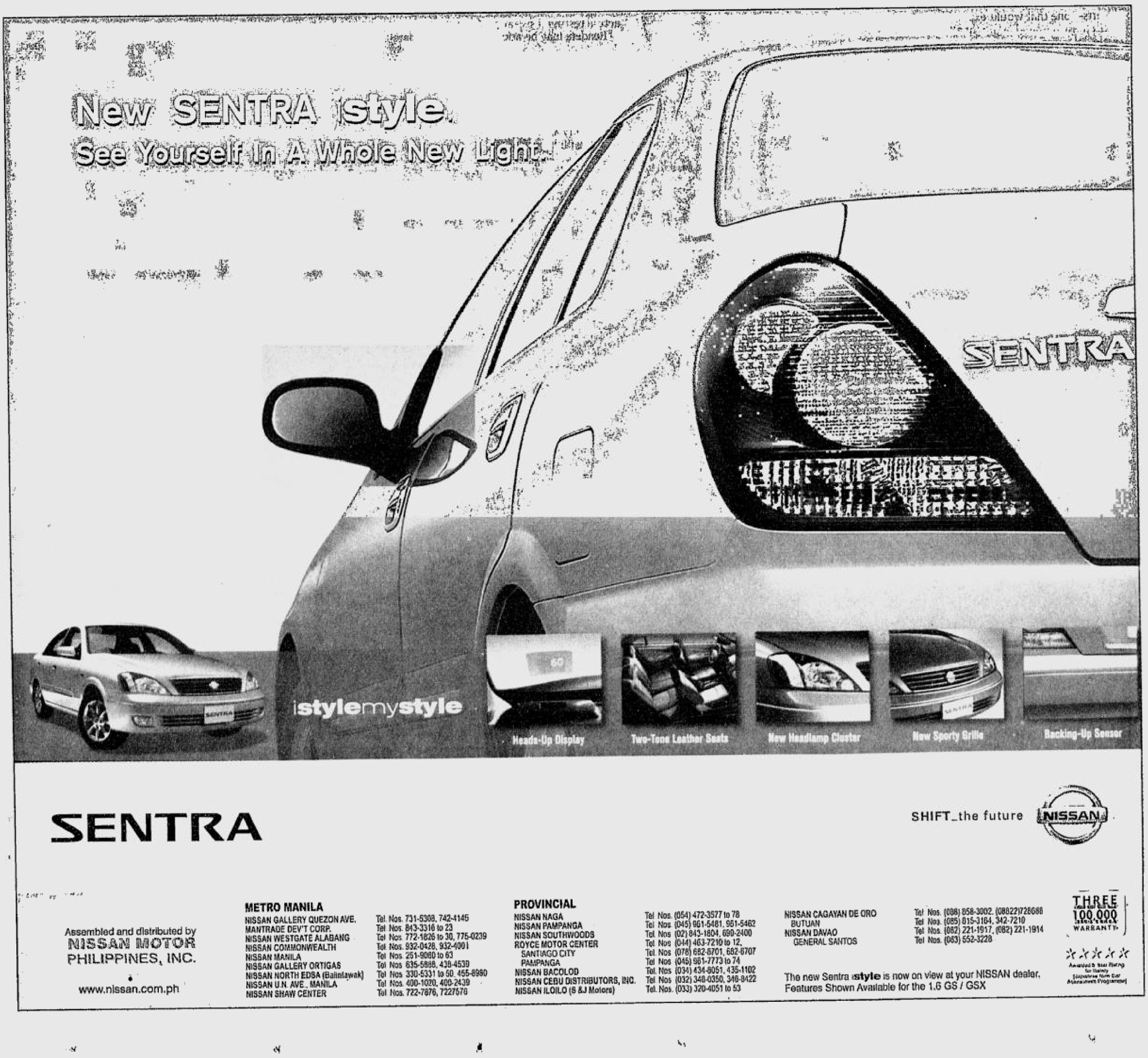

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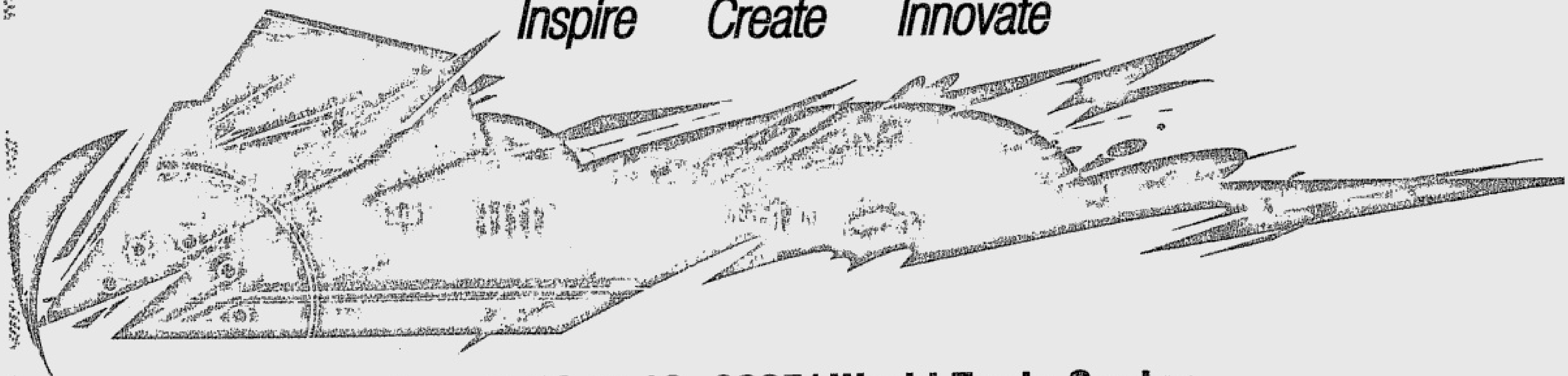

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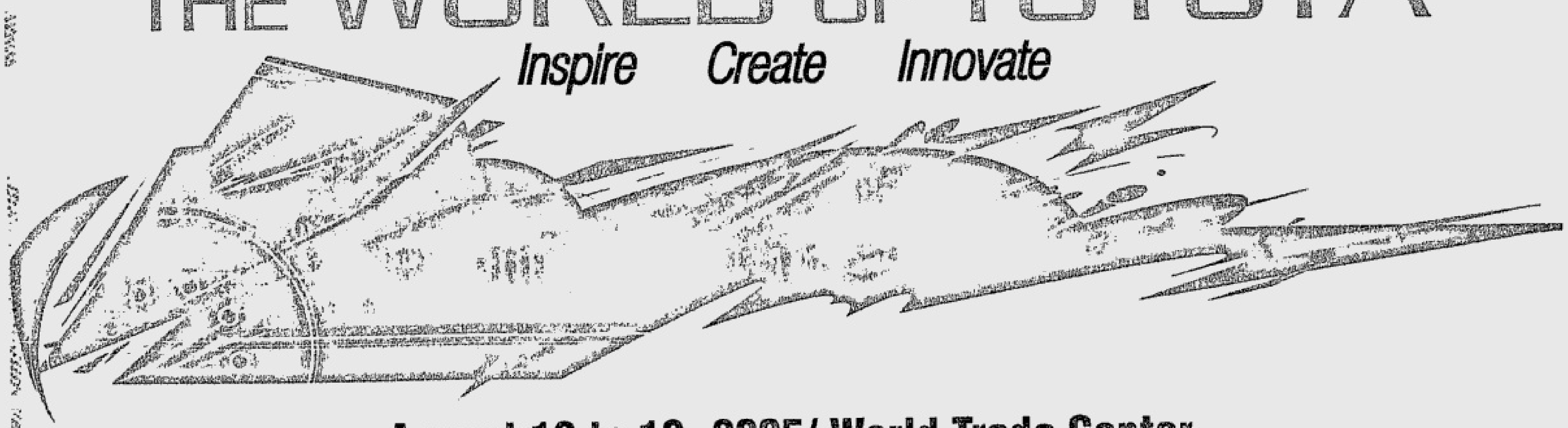

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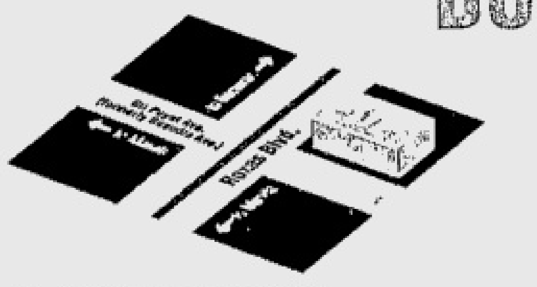

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Sex and the (young) city

Part 2

Last week, we gave you the statistics, we talked about STDs and the need for sex education, we wrote about teenage pregnancy and how life-changing it is. This week, 2bU! explores more sex issues—virginity, common sex misconceptions, contraceptives and even university sex scandals, in an issue that aims to inform, raise awareness and make a difference.

ILLUSTRATION BY LA MISTADES

Youth myths about sex

Even with condoms or withdrawal, there are risks of pregnancy and disease contraction. Young people should not rush into having sex because there are health and emotional risks

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

MANY teenagers nowadays remain ignorant and confused about sex due to the lack of accurate and balanced information. Some parents refuse to openly talk about this touchy subject. Other sources out there (friends, pornography, some parents, etc.) may also provide teeners misleading or incorrect info.

In these times when unwanted pregnancies and STDs are prevalent, being armed with the right information about sex is important. Let 2bU! blast to bits some popular sex myths.

Any man who is still a virgin must be gay

There are still shallow and close-minded people today who believe that any straight guy who is still a virgin must be gay. For them, if a man isn't macho and doesn't megaphone his sexcapades, he must prefer partners of the same sex. (It's interesting to note though that there are closeted gay men who flaunt fake straight conquests to delude others into thinking they are straight.) Society may spotlight the stereotypical macho man who has sex with.a different girl every weekend, but that doesn't mean the virgin straight male doesn't exist.

You should have sex if you love the person

Sure, having sex is a way of expressing love for someone, but love yourself as well by making sure that you won't regret your decisions. Remember that although you may want to prove how much you love your partner by having sex with him, he can also prove his love to you by not pressuring you to do something you're not ready to do. Love is a strong factor to consider before having sex. But it's not the only factor.

A girl won't get pregnant if there is no 'entry'

Some straight couples just rub their sex organs against each other, thinking that the girl won't get pregnant if there is no penetration of the vagina by the penis. But pre-cum may enter the vagina so the girl may still get pregnant.

If the guy doesn't ejaculate, the girl

YOUTH/C4

OLIVER TO
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2nd Year AB Economics Honors
Ateneo de Manila University
Dean's Lister & Commercial Model
Fashion & Music Lover

A fast Internet connection is essential especially when I'm trying to make the most of my study hours. Waiting for sites to download isn't just part of my agenda! I also go online to look at all the fashion websites, check hiphop & techno sites, see current charts and download music. I use it everyday! It's crazy, I'm seriously addicted!

PATRICIA EVANGELISTA
4th Year BA Speech Communications
University of the Philippines
Winner, 2004 International Public Speaking Contest in London, Studio 23 TV Host and Columnist
Literature Addict

My prof lets class off every third session so we'd have a "download day" on the next meeting's topic. Internet is absolutely necessary for research. The faster the connection, the more things get done. There's an incredible variety of information and applications out there—it's just a matter of finding the right tool to take them. I believe PLDT myDSL is that tool.

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* Borzekowski, Dina "Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine" John Hopkins University, 2005

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Dissecting the myth of the modern-day virgin

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

"VIRGINITY? Is there still such a thing nowadays?" a guy friend once scoffed when I raised the subject.

My other male classmates mumbled their assent while poking at their cadavers in a med school class. I decided to try a different tactic.

"What if I told you every female in our section is one?"

Sure enough, I got a unanimous retort: "You've got to be kidding."

I grudgingly agreed, but I couldn't help feeling a little miffed at their reaction. So, they think virginity is a lost concept, huh? Has the big V-word really lost its lofty place in society?

No surprise

Nobody talks about virginity and few think it even exist anymore. It's no surprise that no one goes around bragging about being a virgin nowadays—it's worse than being a has-been child actor.

But, yes, virgins still exist and, no, nothing's wrong with them.

What makes a virgin? For simplicity's sake, let's use this definition: "It's when no penis has ever entered a girl's vaginal orifice."

It's funny to think that in today's urban, pop culture-dominated generation, virgins seem to have been lumped together with other endangered species, such as manatees and legitimate, non-show-biz presidential candidates. Centuries ago, virgins were held in the highest esteem while women who had had premarital sex were ostracized and labeled as prostitutes or "damaged goods."

But now, the importance of virginity seems to be fading fast. Suddenly, sexual activity is the norm, and anyone who's still a virgin by age 25 is practically guaranteed a prime spot in Ripley's museum of rare oddities.

Back in high school, the devirginization of a classmate would qualify as the scandal of the century. Nowadays, a friend who hasn't had sex would be the subject of a scandal among my 20something peers.

> Whether a girl is a virgin or not shouldn't matter if the man loves her Her worth isn't measured by her virginity or lack of it

What has caused this turnabout? Increasing liberalism, modernization, pornography, subliminal (and not-so-subliminal) sexual messages from the media, etc., none of which we haven't heard of and complained about before. It doesn't take a Promil kid to figure out which among the plethora of oft-cited factors are responsible for the apparent "extinction" of virgins.

Stereotyped

One female friend recalled a time when our guy friends were lamenting the lack of virgins in this era. When she protested and told them she was one, the look of utter disbelief on their faces immediately made her regret ever "coming out," even though she was among close friends.

They didn't they believe her because 1) she's beautiful, sexy and sociable, 2) she's had boyfriends and 3) she's already in her 20s. As a sheepish male friend put it, "She doesn't look like one *kasi eh*…"

Outrageous, I know, but it's true. Modern Filipino women who have the looks and the social life to go with it are being so stereotyped whether they like it or not.

It's not uncommon to hear guys declaring, "I want to marry a virgin!" every 10 seconds. Then again, some actually prefer to hook up with non-virgins—"So we don't have to waste time teaching them," as another friend put it pointblank. But raging testosterone levels aside, I'm pretty sure these guys are secretly hoping they'd end up with a virgin.

Some still seem to believe this way: If you're a guy and you've had sex, you're a bona fide stud. But if you're a girl and you've had sex, you're a whore. Yes, maybe that still holds true. But in this so-called postmodern era where liberal sexual views continuously achieve new highs (or lows), that chauvinistic consensus is slowly but surely becoming a thing of the past.

Love is the answer

The real question in the end is, does virginity really matter? After asking a whole bunch of males, the answer I got was unanimous: Whether a girl is a virgin or not doesn't matter if the man loves her.

A woman's worth isn't (and shouldn't be) measured by her virginity or lack thereof. There are still some people who remain virgins by choice and not because they are forced to be so. At the heart of it all is the most basic human right: freedom of choice.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko @atenista.net

The big V

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

"ARE you still a virgin?" has got to be one of the questions a lot of teenagers want to ask other people. And while some do get to ask friends and other people, there are still a lot of us who'd rather wonder in silence and just speculate.

Because even though it's already 2005 and underwear can now be worn as outerwear, virginity (and sex) is still something that not a lot of Pinoys are comfortable talking about openly.

More than "yes" and "no," the usual answer to the question is "secret," and this connotes a lot of things. Apart from implying that virginity is one's own business and is something personal and private, it also suggests that people don't want to confirm or deny—probably because being mysterious is attractive.

One thing I've always found to be mind-boggling about virginity is its definition. I mean, does devirginization happen only when the penis penetrates the vagina? How do gay people lose their virginity then?

One thing I find ugly about virginity is that it unfortunately has double standards. While women have learned that "yes" is the only answer to virginity inquiries (since society teaches that "non-virgin" equals "slut"), men have been led to believe that any virgin male must be gay, and should be ridiculed.

Popular fallacies aside, virginity remains to be a very sensitive and important topic among teenagers. In a generation where a lot of teeners give in to peer pressure, giving up one's virginity is something one should think about a thousand times or so.

The problem with sex at a young age is that, in most if not all cases, the person is still not ready and mature enough to handle the consequences of sex. All he or she cares about is physical intimacy or sexual fulfillment, choosing to forget about such matters as protection.

> The problem with sex at a young age is that, in most cases, the person is still not ready and mature enough to handle its consequences

Such irresponsible behavior actually has consequences: unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, trauma, etc. Yeah, sure, sex is fabulous, but one has got to be ready—in all aspects—before jumping into bed and soiling it.

Giving it up

So when should one give up one's virginity? After circumcision, at the whorehouse? On honeymoon night, out of the country?

There is no specific age, no scheduled time. Although a lot of idealists say honeymoon night is the best time to give up one's virginity, the truth is this doesn't happen all the time. Some people just do it earlier than they should—sometimes with disastrous results. Some people are just too curious sometimes. Others give in to peer pressure.

I've always heard of people saying that virginity is the best gift any woman can give her husband. It's very interesting (and unfair) how I've never heard of anyone saying the same thing about men and their future wives. While I agree with this viewpoint to a certain extent, I still believe that losing my virginity to someone I love—wife or not, male or female, at the right place and time—is the best gift I can give myself.

TQ ANTIQUEÑO

ILLUSTRATION BY TQ ANTIQUEÑO

Hold your tongues

By Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

THE WHOLE virginity issue, it seemed to me, had gone too far when I saw Katya Santos (or some other bold star) proclaiming on TV that she was still a virgin. Here's the medical certificate, she said, triumphantly waving the document in her hand.

While I wholeheartedly agree with the commendable practice of remaining a virgin until marriage, I think there must be something wrong with a system that forces women to come out and openly declare their virginity. After all, it's a personal decision—why does the whole barangay have to know or, for that matter, even care?

I pity the girls who are judged by society when word gets out that they are no longer virgins. "*Nagalaw na*," "*binaboy na*" and "*nawalan ng puri*" are just some of the tasteless ways many people refer to non-virgins.

Things get even worse, when a girl gets pregnant. That's when tongues really start wagging because now there is visible proof that she has had premarital sex.

The thing is, why condemn those who have lost their virginity? Although it isn't exactly a good practice (think of the consequences: pregnancy, STDs and the hang-ups that come with a guilty conscience), no one has the right to denounce girls—yes, girls because there's an existing double standard that allows males to have guilt-free premarital sex—just because they did it.

Condemn, instead, the factors that lead them to it: the media that glorify sex, people who pressure their peers into losing their virginity at an early age and maybe the businesses that make it possible (cheap motels, etc., although it can be argued that these exist because people come to them in the first place).

Choice

But why condemn the people who lose their virginity before marriage? It's their life, their choice.

The best thing, perhaps, is to guide them to make the choices that you feel are right and are best for them, because there is no such thing as the right choice, only the best one.

It's funny to remember the way virginity was handled in high school. Anyone who was possibly not a virgin anymore was observed by everyone. Was she any different from the rest? Did she walk and talk differently? Were her ideas on sex too radical?

Many of us were shocked (or at least pretended to be) at the very idea of not being one. Then a high-school classmate got pregnant, and suddenly, the idea was uncomfortably close to home. Someone we actually knew had lost her virginity, and she had no choice but to own up because the evidence was right before our very eyes.

She told us about her pregnancy during our senior-year retreat, the day before parents were scheduled to visit. Not surprisingly, some girls told their parents about it. After all, it was too good a secret to keep, and some even went as far as to tell their entire *barkada*. Instantly, the looks on their faces showed their judgment: "*pakawalang babae*."

Trained to be shocked

That, of course, is the unconscious reaction that our society has trained us to give. We are trained to be shocked by premarital sex—not as much as we were in high school, but we are shocked just the same—and this makes us judge people without knowing their background, or what caused them to do it in the first place.

In the process, we are training a dishonest society, teaching people to lie about their virginity (or the lack thereof) and to become hypocrites. There are too many stories of women lying to their partners and parents about the state of their hymen just so they could keep the respect of their partner/parents. But is this the way we want things to be? We are slowly trading honesty for a respectable front.

Although the concept of virginity means so much more than an intact hymen, there is also more to life, love, intimacy and honor than virginity.

E-mail the author at bianca-consunji@yahoo.com

Staying safe

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

LAST January, the Department of Health launched its "Ligtas Buntis 2005" program. The campaign, which ran until March, aimed to teach men and women 15-49 years old who lived in urban slums the basic information on responsible parenthood, birth spacing and birth control choices, both natural and artificial.

"Ligtas Buntis" was conceived after a national survey of two million men and women showed that there was an unmet need for sex education in the country. In fact, in Metro Manila alone, there were 264,415 respondents who were not aware of any kind of birth control method.

Unfortunately, even residents of the slum areas next to the DOH offices never heard of the program. Many of them take Mayor Lito Atienza's "Pro-Life" campaign a bit too literally. As one 23-year-old mother said, "They believe that God gives them children because He wants them to have children. It's almost like it's a contest to see who has the most kids."

Which shouldn't be. While the government endorses natural birth control (the majority of the country being Roman Catholic, after all), it should sober up to the fact that, according to the World Health Organization, one in six pregnancies ends up in abortion because it is either unplanned or unwanted. And 9.5 out of 10 unsafe abortions take place in developing countries.

WHO also stated that among the leading causes of deaths among women of reproductive age are complications related to pregnancy and child-bearing.

So be smart, be safe and read up on birth-control methods available in the country. This overview does not include vasectomy and tubal occlusion.

Natural methods

Method: Rhythm/Fertility Awareness/Periodic Abstinence

What it is: Understanding a woman's reproductive cycle to know which days she is fertile—i.e. can get pregnant. A woman is generally fertile for only about a fourth of her cycle. There are three ways to measure fertility: the calendar method, temperature method and cervical mucus method.

Effectiveness: 75-99 percent

Cost: If you decide to make a chart on your own, then it's free. Although it's better to enlist the aid of a gynecologist, which would set you back around P400-P600.

Pros: The Catholic Church approves of it, plus it's free (well, almost).

Cons: If your menstrual cycle is irregular or you can't keep records or your partner can't handle abstinence for a week, skip this. Plus, you're at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases. And, yes, you can get pregnant even if you have your period.

Method: Withdrawal

What it is: The guy withdraws before ejaculating.

Effectiveness: 73-96 percent

Cost: None.

Pros: It's free.

Cons: There's such a thing as pre-ejaculation, which means even though the guy hasn't come, some sperm may have already left the building. And yes, you can get pregnant from pre-ejaculation. And you're putting yourself at risk of contracting STDs.

Method: Abstinence

What it is: You remain celibate.

Effectiveness: 100 percent, unless there's some immaculate conception going on.

Cost: None. Well, maybe sanity, for some.

Pros: It has no hormonal or medical side effects, you can't get any STDs and if you've saved yourself for marriage, you know your wedding gift to your partner would be more super than a big-screen TV.

Artificial family planning

Method: Male condom

What it is: Thin latex worn during intercourse, trapping the sperm and preventing ovulation.

Effectiveness: 85-99 percent

Cost: Could set you back P25 for a box of four.

Pros: Cheap, easy to buy and reduces the chance of catching STD. It can also protect against vaginitis caused by changes in the pH balance of the vagina that can be caused by semen. You don't need a prescription for this, plus it's lightweight and disposable.

Cons: Some say it dulls sensation, and a handful of men complain it pressures them to maintain an erection. Some may be allergic to latex, although there are plastic ones available.

Method: Female condom

What it is: A reversible barrier method that is inserted deep into the vagina like a diaphragm.

Effectiveness: 79-95 percent

Cost: Check your local drug store.

Pros: Protects against STDs, and you don't need a prescription.

Cons: Same as the male condom.

Method: Birth control pills/the pill

What it is: Pills containing hormones that prevent a woman's ovaries from releasing eggs. Ergo, only women take them.

Effectiveness: 92-99 percent

Cost: From P50-P600 a pack, depending on the brand, plus your doctor's consultation fee (it's best to consult a doctor on which brand is the right one for you). Check your local pharmacy.

Pros: Simple, safe, discreet and convenient. Combination pills, which contain both estrogen and progestin, can help get rid of acne, menstrual cramps, cancer of the ovaries and also helps regulate women's cycle.

Cons: Can't protect you from STDs, can't be used by those taking anti-depressants (check with your doctor) and can cause weight loss/gain.

Method: Intrauterine devices

What it is: Small "T" shape devices made of plastic, usually containing copper or hormones. It is inserted into the uterus.

Effectiveness: 99.9 percent

Cost: Ask your gynecologist, since this isn't available over the counter. US patients shell out between $150 and $250.

Pros: Some women claim lighter menstrual flows. It can also—but rarely—be used as an emergency contraceptive. According to Planned Parenthood, it reduces the risk of pregnancy by 99.9 percent if inserted within five days of unprotected intercourse.

Cons: Costly, can increase menstrual cramps and unplanned pregnancy when an IUD falls out without the woman noticing. The risk of tubular infection and uterine puncture are also present: in three out of 1000 insertions, the uterus is accidentally punctured (so be sure to go to a doctor you can trust).

Method: Depo-Provera

What it is: A shot of hormones to regulate a woman's cycle. It prevents the ovary from releasing an egg cell, and thickens the cervical mucus to prevent the sperm from joining the egg.

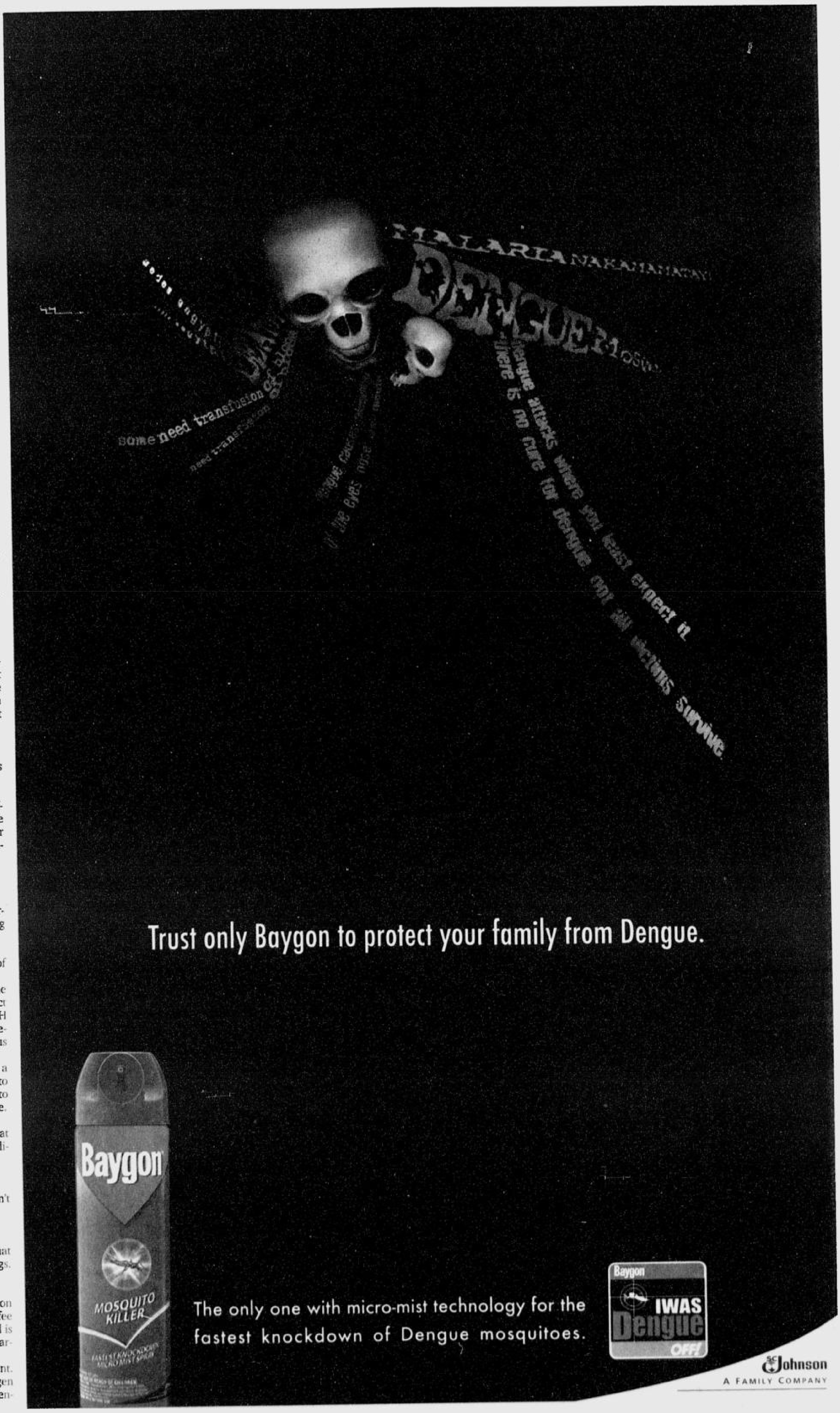
Effectiveness: 97-99 percent

Cost: Ask your gynecologist. It isn't available everywhere and can be a bit pricey, depending on your doctor. US patients pay anywhere between $40 and $60.

Pros: The shot is effective for 12 weeks, plus it's discreet. It also helps prevent cancer of the uterus.

Cons: You have to take a shot every three months, and you can't stay on it for more than two years. Plus, you'll have to wait anywhere between nine months to a year since your last shot to get pregnant.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO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Youth myths...

From page C1

won't get pregnant

A guy is deluded if he thinks he's off the hook just because he didn't ejaculate inside a woman. Even if a man doesn't ejaculate, there is still what is called pre-cum, which already contains sperm. It is also important to note that most men usually don't feel the release of pre-cum even with penetration.

Withdrawal method is safe and effective

The withdrawal method is not safe and effective. Contraction of sexually transmitted diseases is very probable, and pregnancy, too. As we have said, even before ejaculation, there may be pre-cum. Some men withdraw even when wearing a condom. But since condoms may have defects, withdrawal does not lessen the risk of condom failure as well as the risk of pregnancy and disease contraction.

A girl can't get pregnant if she had sex only once

Very untrue. All it takes is one opportunity. A girl can get devirginized and pregnant at the same time. Even without an orgasm, the girl can still get pregnant.

STDs cannot be contracted from having oral sex

The risk is lower with oral sex as opposed to vaginal or anal sex, but one can still contract or pass sexually transmitted diseases.

Having sex makes one an adult

Many teenagers rush into sex because they want to be adults. But sex at an early age, especially when one isn't ready, can bring about regrets, complications and psychological problems.

Source: "Pito Pito, Top 7 Maling Akala Sa Sex, A Sex Comedy on Sex Myths" a standard educational material of the TEENS Healthquarters Franchise Model Project from the Foundation of Adolescent Development, Inc.

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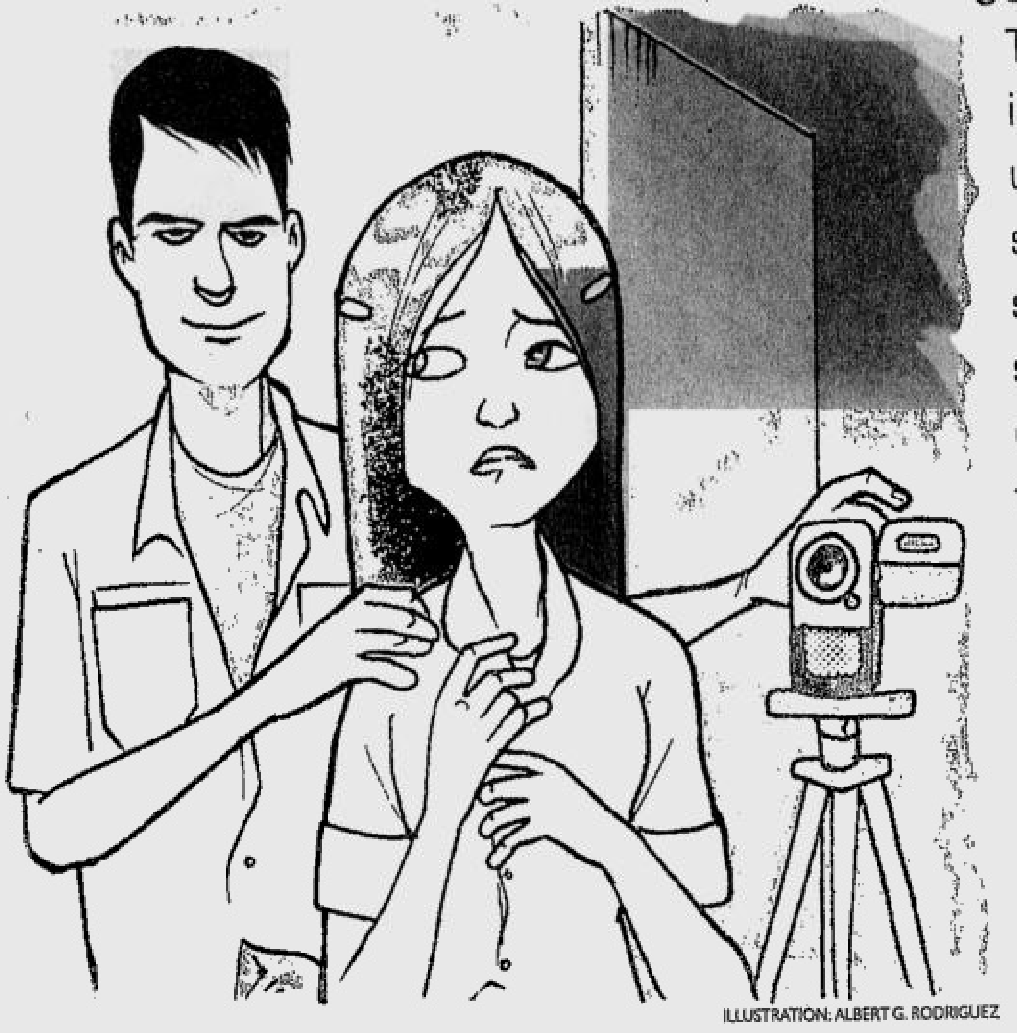

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

The infamous university sex scandals should open our eyes to the dangers of risky intimate behavior aided by easy technology

Sex, school and videotapes

By Maureen Tracy Limpe Tañedo
2bU! Correspondent

NOT a few have seen, or at least been offered, VCD/DVD copies of amateur sex tapes proliferating in the side streets, back streets and *bangketas* of Manila. While there is no novelty to speak of with regard to pornography, the idea of university students caught performing sexual acts on tape has largely been ignored by authorities.

The controversy over these sex tapes involving university students can be attributed to society's propensity to categorize and label. The seeming unlikelihood of young students from name schools participating in the pornographic trade prompts instant judgments: There are those who do this for a living, and there are those who don't.

Prior to the labeling, however, one has to ask: Is it the content of the sex tapes or their exploitative distribution that is offensive to general society's sensibilities?

Consensual?

Professor Filomin Gutierrez of the Department of Sociology in the University of the Philippines, Diliman, says, "The crucial thing to look into is whether it was consensual or not." And consent has many complex sides to it: The participants' consent to engage in these sexual acts, the consent to have them taped and, finally, the consent to have the tapes distributed by pirates who inevitably profit from them.

If there was consent in the first two counts, what could have driven these students to perform sexual acts for a camera?

Gutierrez says, "We can look at it as an experiment. Some youth—not all—might be curious to experiment. When it's there already, some of them might appear to be hesitant about it because of the novelty of the situation, but before they realize it, they're already knee-deep into the situation. There is definitely some form of curiosity, experimentation and discovering the far edges of sexuality."

Professor Gerry Lanuza, also of the UP Department of Sociology, offers another view. "One, [they do it] maybe to preserve the memory. No. 2 is the thrill, and No. 3, there could be an ulterior motive [on the part] of the one who taped. Either *gusto niyang ipagyabang, ipakita sa iba o nangongoleksyon siya.*"

Still, he emphasizes the element of consent.

"The caution here is that there should be an agreement between the participants. *Dapat may kasunduan. 'Sa atin lang ito, pag lumabas man, pwede kang kasuhan* for damages,' et cetera. Those cases *na hindi niya alam na kinukunan na siya...* It's exploitation, and at the same time, intrusion and invasion of privacy. What you do in private should not be seen by other people."

Deviant?

So are these so-called sex scandals a deviant form of behavior? "It's very relative," Gutierrez explains. "If we look at what deviance is, deviances are acts or behaviors that are deemed to veer away from the norm and, as a consequence, are sanctioned, punished, apprehended by society. [The idea of videotaping] is not typical, so from that point of view, it's deviant."

She adds that the definition of deviance can be stretched. Without the participants' knowledge of the tapes being available for public consumption, the videos may only be meant for sexual experimentation and nothing else. "The definition (of deviance) may be a little blurred there because, for some people, even pornography isn't deviant, [but rather] a means of expressing one's sexuality," she says.

On Lanuza's part, "*Hindi ako naniniwala sa* deviance. What is the motive of the person who distributed these tapes? But I would not go so far as to say this is a pathological problem. As a soci-

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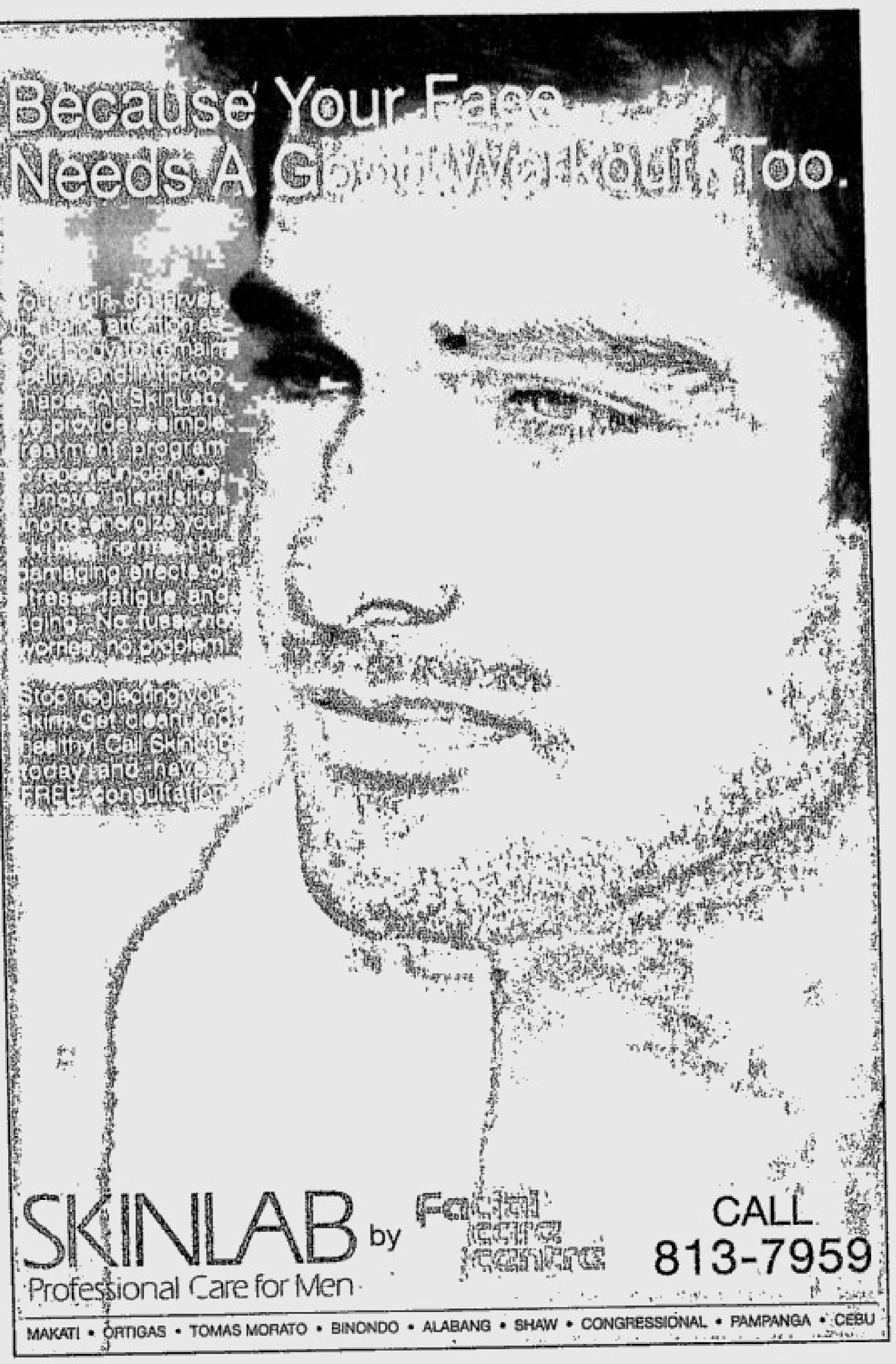

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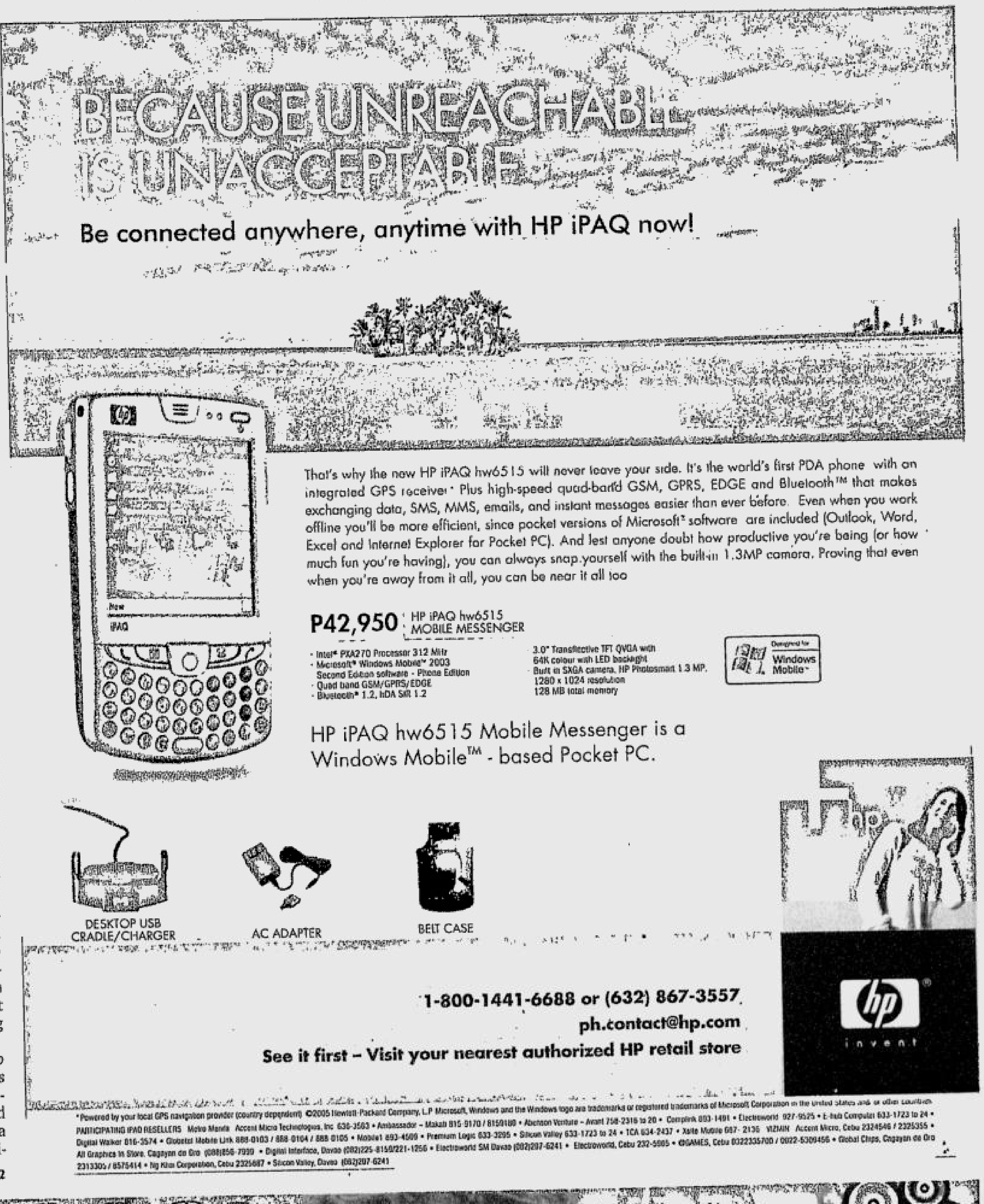

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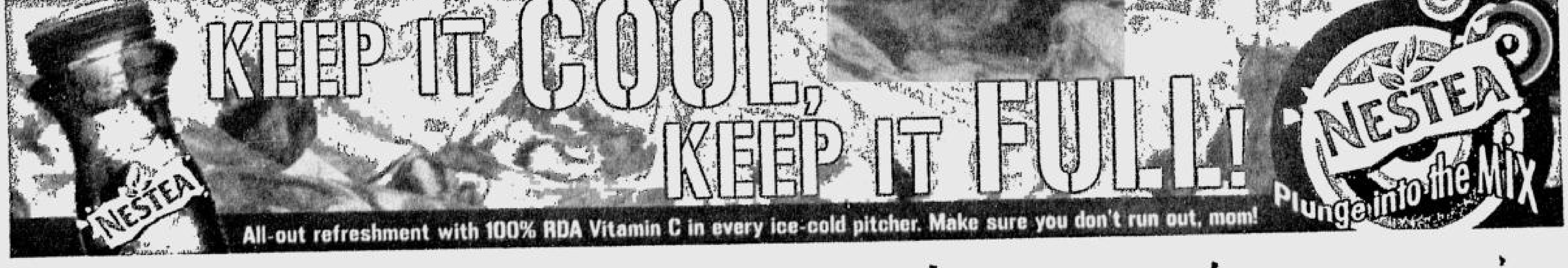

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ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Sex, school

From page D1

ologist, my question is how these people interpret the ongoing process of their sexuality."

Exploitation

What is truly deviant for Gutierrez is the idea of distributing the tapes. "If the assumption was, 'this is just for us, it will not be distributed,' then what is deviant there is the breaching of the trust, and, of course, the exploitation by the pirates and the ones who profited [from the tapes]."

The victimization of young people in this picture now stands as a fair warning to their peers and a testament to how the continuous advancement of technology is abused.

As Lanuza puts it, "It has a lot to do with the availability of technology for recording and for reproduction of these videos. *Madali nang makakuha ng* video cam *at mga* surveillance camera. In a society where these are affordable and easily accessible, these things are hard to control... If you could wiretap the President, [what more everyday citizens]..."

Gutierrez concurs. "So [the students in the videos] who were originally willing participants and were enjoying themselves have now become victims. When the videos are circulated, the dynamics of the situation change."

"It all boils down to profit-oriented motives (by the pirates). *Unang-una, gusto nila makabenta.* Unfortunately, the market is saturated (with sex tapes). So for these tapes to be eye-catching, they have to come up with these (university sex scandals)," says Lanuza.

Many others, however, don't see it this way. Rather, they are more likely to question why the participants agreed to be videotaped in the first place, and why they shouldn't share part of the blame for the ensuing scandal. Are young people today really more sexually active, often in risky ways?

"It is only now that these things are coming out," says Lanuza. "*Dahil dati, tago. Nangyayari na 'yun, 'yun nga lang, walang* technology. But it has always been there, and the statistics are rising." According to the 2002 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Study, a nationwide survey conducted by the University of the Philippines Population Institute, in 1994, 17.8 percent of surveyed youth had had premarital sex. In 2002, that number had risen to 31.3 percent.

For Gutierrez, publicizing the tapes represented "(a) more extreme (breaching of the premarital sex norm)... it's exhibitionism. In the same context, the accepted notion of sexuality in our society is that it must be done in the context of love,. of marriage and of course, of privacy."

Lanuza notes that, "(In one of the tapes) *maaawa ka talaga sa babae,* because she seemed confident that she was doing it for love. You have no right to publicize that because it's private."

"Society's expectations on the woman and her unconditional love for a man are also problematic. *Nasa* losing end *siya kapag naghiwalay sila,*" he adds. "*Kaya nawawalan ng* control *ang babae.* They were trained to believe that when they have a boyfriend, it is for life and they will be married. *Ibibigay nila ang lahat sa lalaki dahil sa* expectation *na,* 'after all, *kami naman ang magkakatuluyan nito.*'"

Shock value

The shock that stems from these tapes helps explain why these tapes are deemed "scandalous" in the first place.

"[Even] as society reprehends or controls deviance, sometimes, it allows deviance to exist so that those in the norm can vicariously live through it or can see how far things would go," Gutierrez explains. "Some deviances are allowed to test the dangerous waters for the rest of us who are more conservative. People are always curious about, or maybe even titillated by, the idea that these things happen, whether they derive pleasure or moral indignation from these things."

She also highlights the role of media in the fracas. "You have to remember that in the media, unfortunately, sex and violence really sell."

And of course, sexual norms are changing, aided in no small part by technology. What might have been taboo then may be commonplace now. Gutierrez is the first to admit this. "On the basis of (these) incidents, I think the sexual norms among Filipinos are gradually changing. It's changing, though not as abruptly as the tabloids would have us believe."

But she has words of caution to share with young people who engage in risky sexual behavior. "The youth may not be as prepared as they think they are for the emotional ramifications of sexuality. There is emotional trauma in being improperly exposed to it."

Hello, is anyone listening?

Scandal Asia

By Saleema Devi Refran
2bU! Correspondent

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ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

VIDEO scandals are nothing new to our Asian neighbors. In fact, the Philippines is but catching up to an already existing trend in this part of the world.

In Taiwan and Indonesia, similar scandals have paved the way for strengthening and enacting laws that protect people from becoming hapless victims.

The Philippines is but catching up to Indonesia and Thailand when it comes to controversial sex videos

Controversial

Originally thought of as a scandal involving students from a known Manila university (which later was said to have come out with a video scandal of its own), "Itenas" is the most controversial video in Indonesia to date.

The video, which came out in 2001, showed two college students celebrating their 23rd month as a couple in a Jakarta hotel. Students Adi and Nanda, then 20 and 19, wanted to capture their celebration on film.

The guy, Adi, went to a video rental store to have the footage transferred to a video CD. The store attendant was happy to transfer the footage and was happier when he saw what was in it. He made a copy for himself and several other friends.

One of the copies landed in the hands of Hadi Darmanto and Sri Rama. The two named the video "Itenas" after a prominent school in Indonesia where the "actors" were supposedly enrolled. They then sold copies of the video in the black market. It became the most controversial and most-talked-about video in Indonesia.

Today, pirated copies of the video are available in other Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, even in Europe and the United States, and can also be downloaded from the Internet.

It didn't take long for Adi and Nanda's parents, relatives, schoolmates and even perfect strangers to see their home movie. The two were subjected to a great deal of shame and humiliation. Nanda became depressed and reportedly didn't want to leave her room for months.

A predominantly Muslim country, Indonesia has surprisingly lax laws on pornography and piracy. If found guilty for participating, performing in or distributing such material, one can be punished with 18 months' imprisonment and fined Rp4,500 (less than 50 US cents or P25). With the rise of widely available amateur pornography, lawmakers are now considering harsher penalties for law offenders.

Darmanto and Rama were found guilty of copying and distributing the "Itenas" video and were sentenced to nine months in prison. The court saw Adi and Nanda as unsuspecting victims. Adi was expelled from his college while Nanda was suspended for two semesters.

Shock

The Taiwanese had the shock of their lives in 2001 when copies spread of hidden camera-taped steamy sessions between Chu Mei-feng and a married Tsai Jen-chien, both former government officials.

Chu Mei-feng is a former director of the Cultural Affairs Bureau in Hsinchu County and a popular TV reporter, while Tsai Jen-chien is a former mayor of the Hsinchu City.

The then 36-year-old Chu was a beloved cultural director and poster girl for the New Party. Many people looked up to her, and she was considered one of Taiwan's most promising women. Ironically, she was forced to resign as a broadcast journalist in 1992 after she used a hidden camera for one report. Who knew that same device would be her downfall almost a decade later?

More than 10 pinhole surveillance cameras were found inside her apartment. Investigators also found a dozen or so other recording devices inside her home, office and car. Clearly, the perpetrator was out to destroy Chu's character.

It turned out that the hidden cameras were placed by Chu's spiritual adviser and trusted friend, Kuo Yu-ling. And in a shocking twist, the person who ordered the placement of the taping devices was revealed to be no other than the other "star" of the video, Tsai Jen-chien. The 40-minute video was said to have been peddled to the magazines by Kuo's daughter, Kao Chun-chun.

While politics was an easy explanation, it was apparent that the motive against Chu was more on a personal level. All of this materialized after Chu's relationships with Tsai and Kuo had reportedly soured.

Copies of the VCD were reportedly sold at $30 in the black market. The tabloid magazine Scoop mass-distributed the copies by adding them in one of its issues. The Taiwanese government eventually seized copies of the video and the magazine from newsstands.

Prosecutors sought one-year imprisonment for Tsai and four years for Kuo for violating the country's privacy law, as well as for theft, forgery, and undermining morality. Scoop president Shen Yeh was similarly charged with violating the privacy law.

Chu kept quiet for some time but later confirmed she was indeed the woman in the infamous video. She expressed regrets, saying that she "kept bad company and erred."

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAV

A victim's tale

By Saleema Devi Refran
2bU! Correspondent

KRISTINA (not her real name) was like any other typical college working student. She went to school in the morning and worked as a barista in one of the many branches of a big coffee shop chain in Manila at night.

She was an average student, a loving *ate* to her younger siblings and a good daughter who supported her mom. You could almost call her life perfect. She even had the biggest and most promising jock on campus as a boyfriend. What she didn't know was that her boyfriend would cause her so much humiliation later on, and leave her scarred for life.

"It was my friends who informed me," Kristina said. "I wouldn't have found out had they not told me."

Kristina was fast becoming the biggest amateur sexy star in the country without her knowing it. She had become part of a video sex scandal.

Blacking out

At first, Kristina brushed off all claims of her being party to one of the many amateur sex videos sprouting all over the Internet and the side streets of Manila. "I don't even recall having been filmed anywhere, not even for any school project," she said.

One of her friends said that her cousin, who studied on the other side of the metro, received a copy of it over the Internet. Kristina immediately asked to have a copy sent to her.

"Watching it was like putting a gun to my head and pulling the trigger," Kristina recalled. She was stoic the entire time while her friends were crying all around her. She remembered blacking out, like everything around her was just part of a bad nightmare. She simply couldn't believe what was happening. The girl on the video was her, and she couldn't even remember how the entire thing was taped.

Kristina's then-boyfriend Mark* was unaware of the entire setup, but he was aware of something else. At one point, he let one of his buddies tape him while doing the deed.

Placed in a very difficult position, Kristina deliberately started missing classes. She also resigned from work. To step anywhere near her school felt like meeting her death. It was also at this time that her schoolmates found out about the video. One time in a mall, a schoolmate whom she knew only by face said hi to her. But when the girl thought Kristina was not within earshot anymore, she said something nasty, so nasty that Kristina was reduced to tears.

To make Kristina's situation worse, Mark left for Europe without saying a word. Apparently, the humiliation was too much for him to handle. Alone and very depressed, Kristina came close to committing suicide. "I was at that moment where I no longer saw why I should still continue to live," she said.

Kristina was close to losing everything. Her future was on hold because the idea of her graduating seemed impossible with all of her absences, and her mother was already getting suspicious over her sudden depression.

Sources of strength

Kristina's friends and her faith in God became her sources of strength. Her friends did everything to get Kristina back on her feet. They talked to her teachers to give her another chance. They made sure she submitted all her requirements even if she wasn't always in school. On days when she had to go to school, her friends made sure they protected her.

"I knew that in some ways, they were getting some slack. It doesn't really do you good to be associated with a 'porn' star," she said.

Kristina, with the help of her friends, was able to graduate. She prayed to God to forgive her and give her another chance. She knew that stepping into the real world could give her some sort of a clean slate.

But something as damaging as a video scandal was like a ghost that continuously haunted her. Months into her first job, someone in the office stumbled upon her video. Before she knew it, she was the topic at every workstation. To save the company from any more trouble (and hersel the humiliation), Kristina submitted he resignation.

Thankfully, Kristina's friends were always there to help her. They helped he get another job (in a company that didn exactly have many employees) and get a new look.

Now, she maintains this new look to dissociate herself from the video. And she i slowly beginning to move on from her humiliating experience.

"There are good days when I don't eve think about it. But there are days when feel that everyone is out to judge me an humiliate me," she said. Other times, she also becomes paranoid about people recognizing her. She just motivates herself by thinking that people don't really know her what she's been through and who she really is as a person.

What lesson has she learned from the experience? "God doesn't give us trials He knows we can't overcome," said Kristina.

Buddies with benefits

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

HAVING friends is one of the best things in life. They're there to listen to your endless woes, make you laugh and unconditionally accept and love you. The list of what they can do for you is endless. But does it include sexually satisfying you whenever you're horny?

Having sex with friends can be good or bad, depending on how you look at it. It can be good when the friendship is so deep and strong that sex can only bring you closer. But it is bad when the only things it can cause you are awkwardness and eventual separation.

Personally, I believe that friends should not have sex with each other. For crying out loud, it isn't something friends usually do. I mean, go bowling or something, not tumble into bed.

Then again, I must be doing something wrong using the words sex and friends in the same sentence. Friendship, after all, is usually thought of as a pure and platonic relationship that should have no space for romance and sex.

Phenomenon

"F**k buddies" is the term used to refer to people who are more than acquaintances but not really friends, and who have sex. They're not boyfriend-girlfriend (or boyfriend-boyfriend or girlfriend-girlfriend). They're not emotionally attached to each other; they're just sex partners. And it's not as if they're exclusive. Usually, they can have sex with other people whenever they want, as frequently as they want.

What makes this kind of relationship work is how both parties get what they want. It's all about sex, really, and as long as they are both sexually satisfied, nothing else matters. No need for romantic dinners, mushy love letters or mix CDs. What I assume to be the most charming aspect of the f**k buddy phenomenon is the freedom of both parties to live their usual lives and know that someone's just there to scratch the sexual itch. Talk about fast love.

But of course, the setup isn't perfect. No matter how ideal it may seem to the lecherous, it has its own faults and loopholes. For starters, since it's just a relationship based on sex, there is only sexual fulfillment, nothing else. And since temptation is nearer to sex than love, being dumped, sexually, frequently happens. The freedom to have sex with just anybody also means a higher risk of getting sexually-transmitted diseases.

Not really friends

Sex does happen between friends sometimes, and when this occurs, the friendship is definitely at risk of being ruined. It's either you end up as lovers or as ex-friends after sex.

If you are f**king friends, I think it's very probable that you're not really friends, or at least one of you doesn't consider the other as a friend. Because if you're really friends and you want your friendship to last, sex should be nowhere near the relationship.

So if you have entertained kinky thoughts involving supposed friends, better clarify things, define the relationship and come clean with your intentions. You seriously need to brush up on your honesty and sincerity.

If you have kinky thoughts about your supposed friends, you seriously need to brush up on your honesty and sincerity

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Avoiding scandal in the tech world

By Javier Mata
2bU! Correspondent

The digital spy is everywhere. Don't risk exposing your intimate moments with the rest of the world

IN A COUNTRY that trades gossip like gold bars, the wrong thing revealed at the wrong time may cause serious damage. With the advent of the Internet, it become easier to cause a digital scandal. The hapless victims of such have learned their lesson the hard way. Thankfully for the rest of us, technology has also provided ways to make sure that what happens in the bedroom stays in the bedroom. Here are useful tips.

Never give your video to a third party to be copied/converted. One of the biggest errors of victims is that they handed over their video to total strangers through video conversion stores. The thing you have to remember is that they actually get to see your "directorial debut." Unscrupulous persons may find your video "entertaining" enough to share with friends.

Remember, there is a digital trail. People think they can get rid of videos on their personal computers by simply deleting them. Any computer expert, however, will tell you a little known fact... deleted files are not completely dumped. Most computers "backup" files and put deleted ones in the recycle bin. This means that anybody can open the bin and recover files you have deleted. Remedy this by simply emptying the recycle bin. Additionally, computer maintenance software like Norton Utilities have ways of retrieving data... be aware of them and take additional steps to "clean" your computer by studying the applications.

E-mail is not secure. Even before the scandals, many people had made the mistake of sending very private e-mails to supposedly close friends only to discover later their friends had forwarded the messages to other people. There is a saying that once something is on the Net you no longer have control over it. Don't be tempted to use it to send your videos and/or pictures of "exposed" moments.

ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Additional notes

Some companies have a policy of screening the e-mails their employees send using the company e-mail accounts.

Phone protection. While the problem is not as rampant here, there is a growing trend of voyeurs using their mobile phones to discreetly take pictures and videos of other people's intimate moments. Be wary of this. More recent phones have a distinctive "click" when they take pictures. Tell-tale lights can also be warning signs.

Moreover, if you and your loved one took pictures that you wish to remain between the two of you, it is best to take some extra precautions. Mobile phone software is available that puts passwords on both your memory card and the pictures and video clips themselves (Handy Photosafe by epocware is one such software: www.epocware.com)

Beware of hidden cameras. Motels of ill repute may hide cameras that record bedroom activity. If there is an electronic device inside the room that doesn't work (like an alarm clock) than chances are, it is a disguised camera. Additionally, watch out for the two-way mirror: point a flashlight at the mirror; if the light goes right through, then the mirror is two-way.

Don't do it. Is it really worth the risk? The "act" is supposed to be between two people and should stay that way. Remember that the safest place to keep memories is in your brain, not on hard disk.

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Dr. Mel Levine
Pediatrician, Author & [illegible]

ACCELERATE
the development of your child's
Social Skills

In school, we admire students whose names echo throughout the corridors, those who seem to know everyone around campus. They say that these people possess "charm" and good social skills. Social skills are very important both in and out of school, so how do we help our children develop them?

University of North Carolina professor and author Dr. Mel Levine says, to help your children develop their skills, you have to understand how their minds work and how they learn. Dr. Levine is one of the best-known education experts and pediatricians in the US; he has helped hundreds of children overcome their learning difficulties. He says that the mind, like the body, has different systems that are responsible for specific functions. These systems are dependent upon each other and work together to make learning successful.

Two of the eight systems of the mind related to one's social skills are the social thinking and motor systems.

The **Social Thinking System** helps us become comfortable when talking to people. It also helps us become involved and work well with a group. It lets us cope tactfully with conflicts involving others, enabling us to maintain successful relationships, establish friendships and keep old ones afloat.

The **Motor System** controls the tight connections between the brain and muscles all over the body. It greatly contributes to our overall self-concept and confidence, which is very important when dealing with other people. It also determines whether or not one would excel in group activities like sports and the performing arts.

By understanding these two systems and knowing how they work together, you can help improve and develop your child's social skills. Together with the other six systems of the mind, they help your child develop the skills necessary for him to excel in school. Dr. Levine says you should also be aware of your child's "neurodevelopmental profile", a list of his personal strengths and weaknesses. This profile is determined by Genes, Family Life and Stress Level, Cultural Factors, Friends, Emotions, Educational Experience and Health. Providing the best environment and encouragement will aid your child in developing a positive profile that would help him learn better.

To further help your child get ahead, make sure you provide him with the best nutrition. Give him Progress Gold. It is the only growing-up milk for kids one year and older that contains the Gold Brain and Body Formula, a breakthrough blend of 25 essential nutrients plus Preformed DHA and AA that help accelerate brain and visual development. It also has Natural Mixed Carotenoids that help strengthen immunity, and Zinc that helps promote faster growth.

Help your child accelerate his development with the right nourishment. This, along with your best care, may help your child excel in school and bring out the inherent strengths of his mind's systems.

Dr. Mel Levine will be in the Philippines on August 12-13, 2005. Be there when he conducts the "Educating All Kinds of Minds" seminar at the Every Nation Building at the Fort, Taguig. Help your child accelerate his development by understanding how his mind works and how he learns. **Call 927-0143/926-5920 or log on to www.maximusinventus.com** to register.

Educating All Kinds of Minds
August 12-13, 2005
Every Nation Building (formerly VLI)
Fort Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig

Reference:
Levine, M. 2002.A Mind at a Time. Simon&Schuster, New York. Chapter 2, pp27-50.

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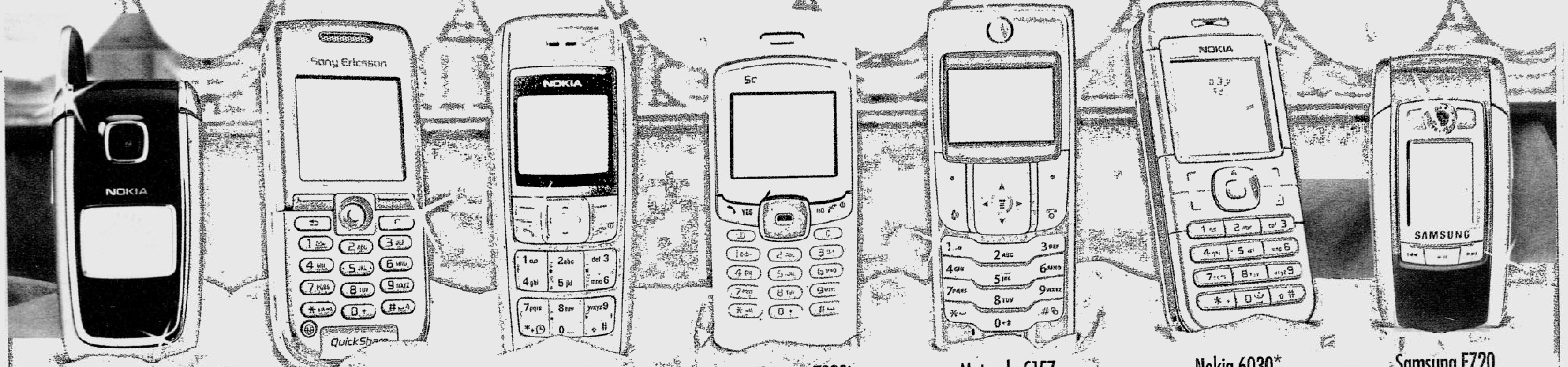

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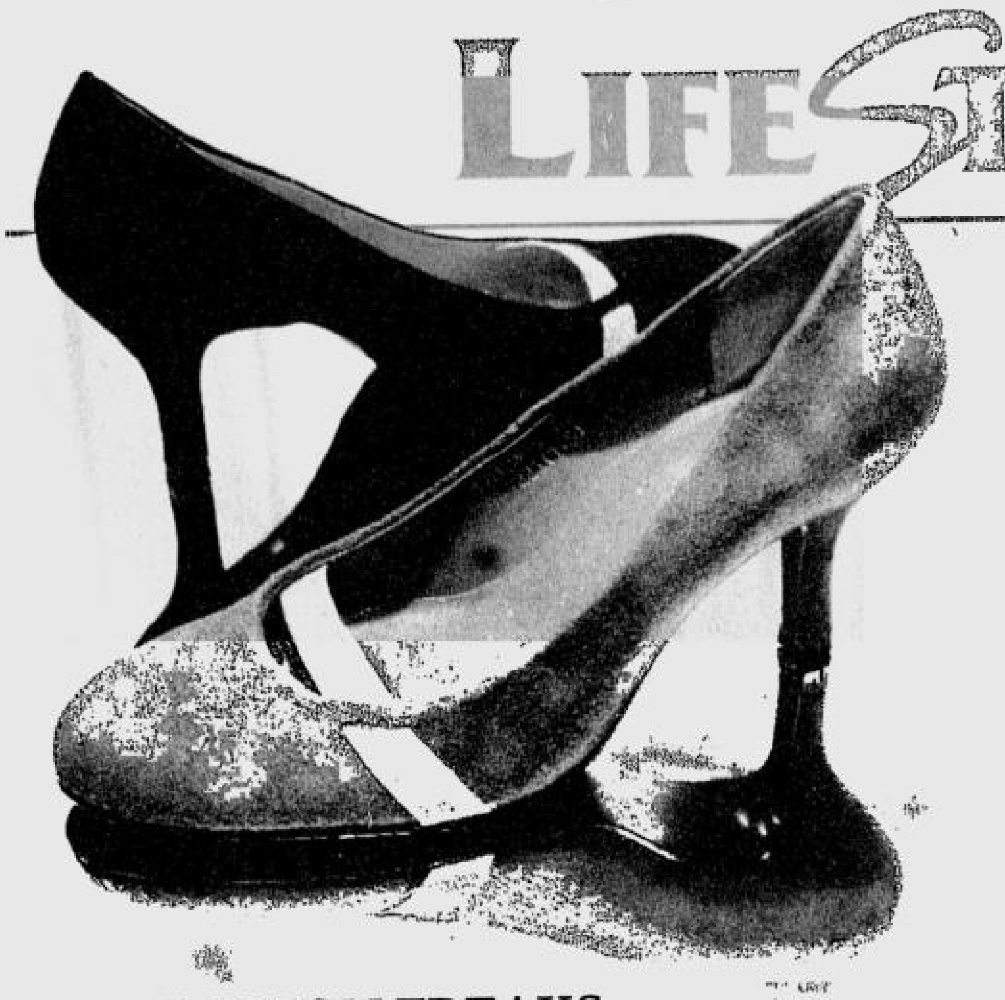
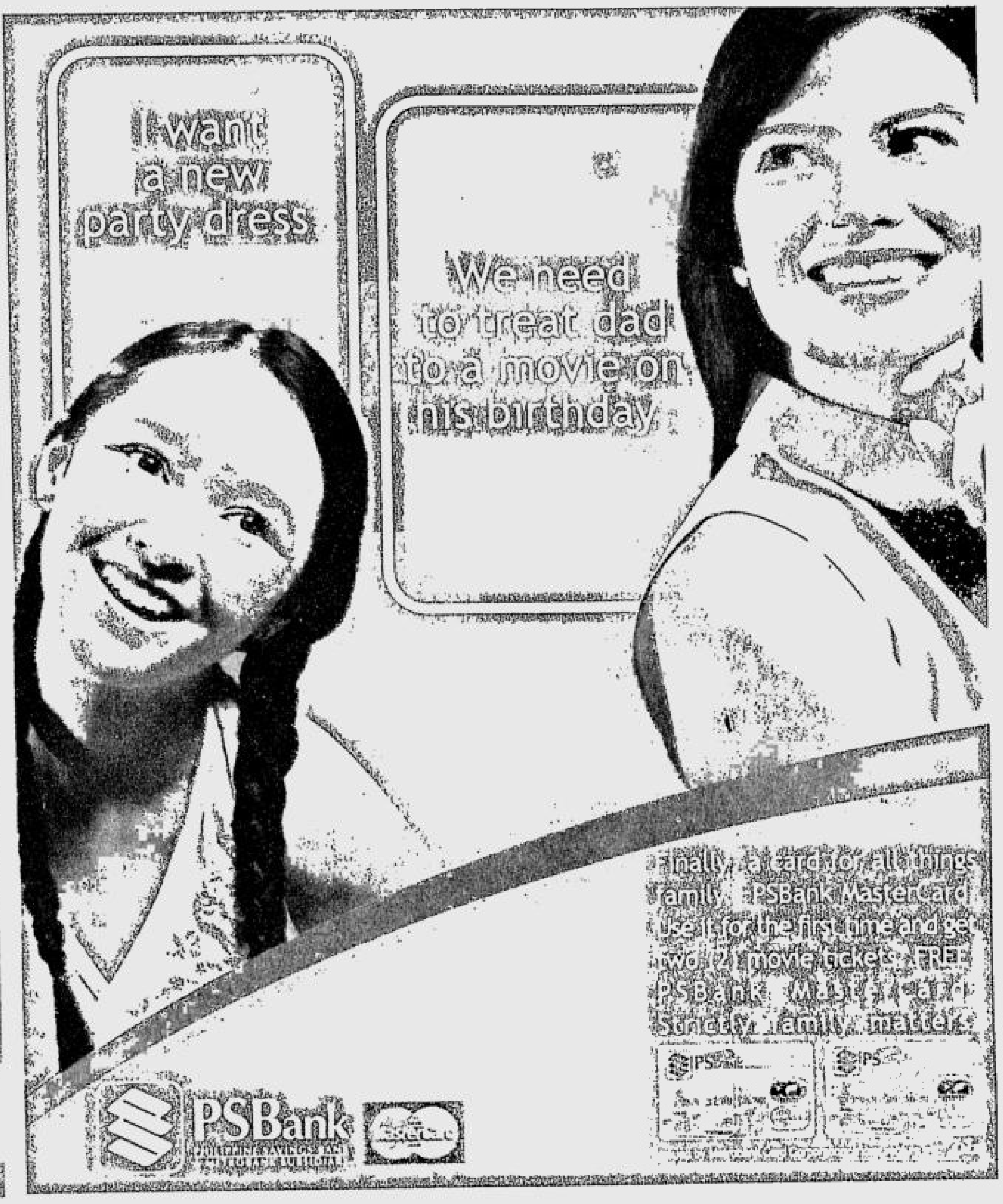


ONE pair is never enough!

Great news for shoe lovers—Hotwind is here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THE FASHION FREAKS

Shanghai's sole secret

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Raffy Lerma

WHEN Filipinas in the know fly to Shanghai, one boutique is always on their must-visit list.

Hotwind.

This is where they buy drool-worthy, designer-looking shoes at very affordable prices. "Some women buy eight or even 10 pairs at a time," Andrea Cruz said.

Andrea, along with her friends Rommel Juan, Rina Azcuna and Boompy Martel, decided to bring the line to Manila for the benefit of shoe-loving Pinays.

Most of the friends are not new to business, and Hotwind is their first plunge into the shoe industry. Why shoes?

"Because we all like shoes," Andy said simply.

But bringing in Hotwind isn't as easy as it sounds.

"We pursued them big time. Just the language barrier was a major problem. It took four months of negotiations before we were finally able to bring the shoes in," Andrea said.

Apparently, the Shanghai-based brand wasn't too keen on exporting their products. They were more than satisfied with their large market in China. But the partners didn't give up easily. They hired an interpreter, kept in constant touch with the people behind the brand and flew to and from Shanghai in their desire to get the rights to bring the shoes here.

First export base

Their efforts paid

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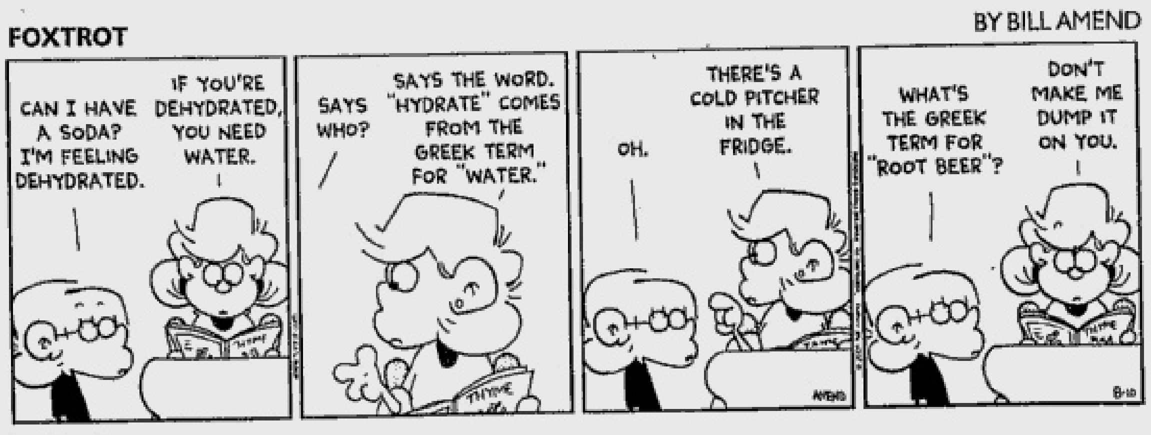
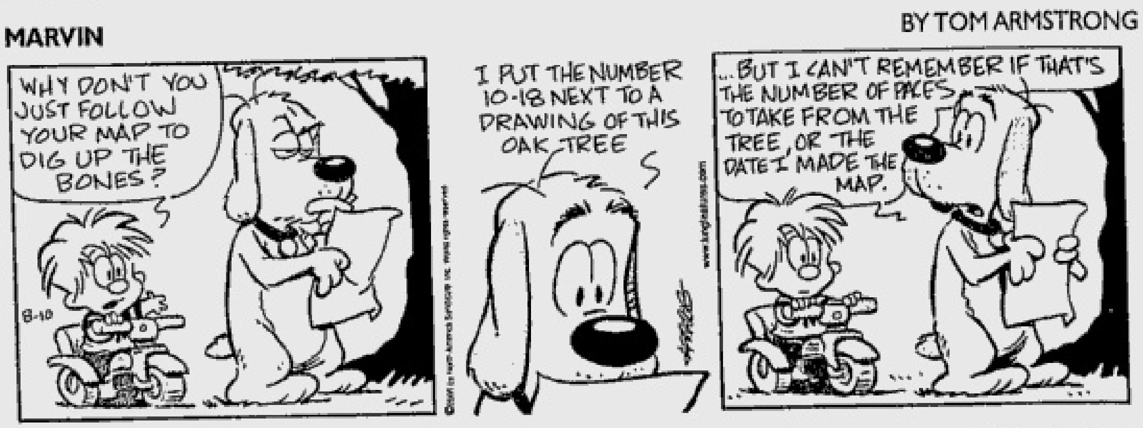
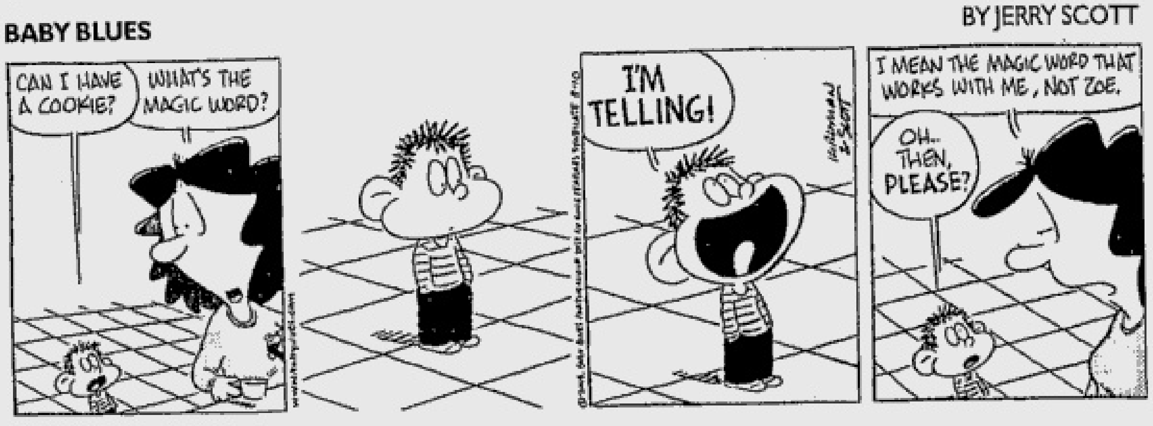

CAN I HAVE A SODA? I'M FEELING DEHYDRATED.
IF YOU'RE DEHYDRATED, YOU NEED WATER.
SAYS WHO?
SAYS THE WORD. "HYDRATE" COMES FROM THE GREEK TERM FOR "WATER."
OH.
THERE'S A COLD PITCHER IN THE FRIDGE.
WHAT'S THE GREEK TERM FOR "ROOT BEER"?
DON'T MAKE ME DUMP IT ON YOU.
8-10

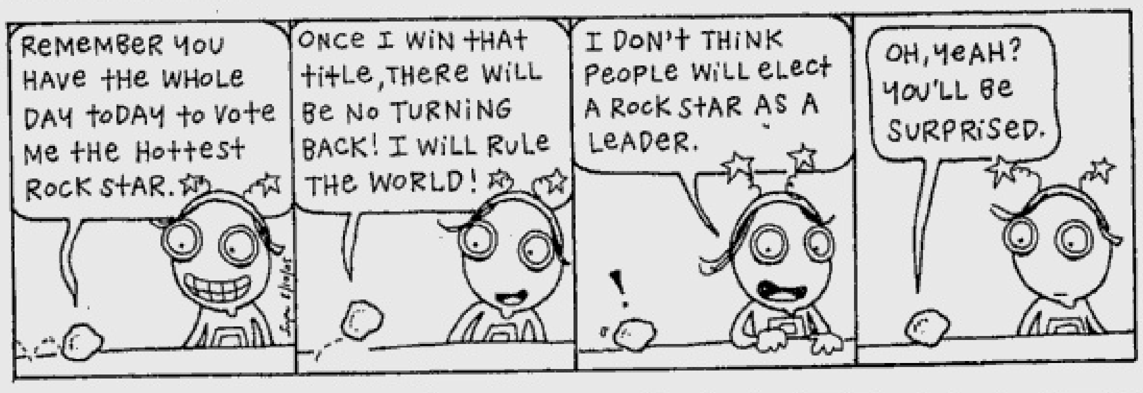
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


WHY DON'T YOU JUST FOLLOW YOUR MAP TO DIG UP THE BONES?
I PUT THE NUMBER 10-18 NEXT TO A DRAWING OF THIS OAK TREE
...BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER IF THAT'S THE NUMBER OF PACES TO TAKE FROM THE TREE, OR THE DATE I MADE THE MAP.
8-10

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


CAN I HAVE A COOKIE?
WHAT'S THE MAGIC WORD?
I'M TELLING!
I MEAN THE MAGIC WORD THAT WORKS WITH ME, NOT ZOE.
OH.. THEN, PLEASE?

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Remember you have the whole day today to vote me the hottest rock star.
Once I win that title, there will be no turning back! I will rule the world!
I don't think people will elect a rock star as a leader.
!
Oh, yeah? You'll be surprised.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a marvelous voice and speaking style. Your lively, entertaining personality magnetizes people to you. Although you have an outer mask of bravura, you are actually quite private. Feedback from others is important to you. You want to shine! Expect increased solitude (to learn something important) in the year ahead.

Birthdate of: Devon Aoki, model; Antonio Banderas, actor; Rosanna Arquette, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have good ideas about how to improve things at work. However, you might have to introduce these ideas carefully so that others endorse them too.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel unusually passionate today. Romance could sweep you off your feet. Parents must be particularly patient with children. Remember that they follow your example, not necessarily your instructions.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might want to get rid of things you no longer need at home. You want to clear the decks. You need more breathing space. Because of this, you're throwing stuff out!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Even though you want something quite passionately today, don't insist on it. The more you insist, the further it will slip from your hands. Be patient.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel obsessed about buying something today. You feel you have to have it. You might want to let this feeling of obsession subside; then you'll have a clearer idea of how to spend your hard-earned cash.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Resist the temptation to try to tell others how to improve their lives. Even if you see obvious possibilities, others are not receptive—not today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Ignore feelings that disturb your peace of mind today. These are just old tapes running around in your head. You don't have to feel guilty about anything.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't insist on getting your own way with a friend today, or possibly a group. Likewise, don't let others run roughshod over your wishes. Work for a win/win solution.

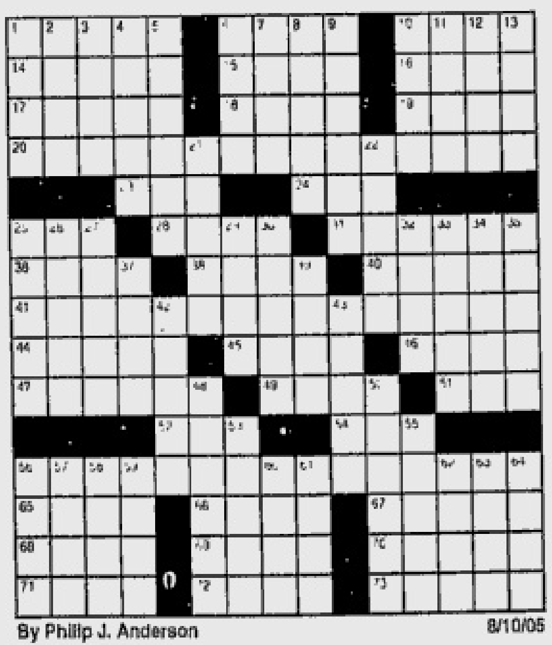
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your ideas about how to make things look more attractive are excellent. But if others don't agree with you, and they have input into the situation, what can you do?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You have a strong drive to achieve certain results related to publishing, higher education and travel today. You'll get what you want, but you might meet with resistance.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your involvement in a romantic relationship is very intense today. Do not get caught up in jealousy. Take the high road. Keep a positive frame of mind.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You have ideas about how to improve a partner or someone close to you (or perhaps vice versa). Instead, why not appreciate what is already there?

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
8/10/05

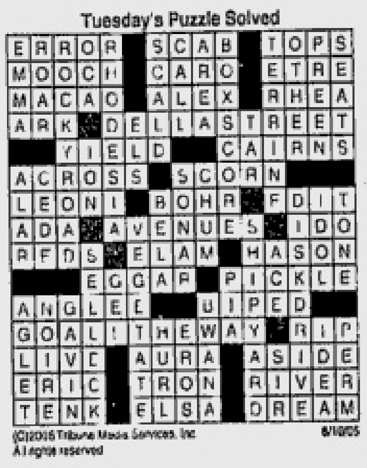
ACROSS

1 Sty fare
6 Nuisance
10 Terrier in Oz
14 Subject matter
15 Perry's creator
16 Manchurian border river
17 Showplace
18 Fed
19 Catnap
20 Things to break
23 Tobacco residue
24 Salon substance
25 Top off
28 Crimson Tide, to fans
31 Chain of inns
36 Frizzy do
38 William Gibson's "__ Lisa Overdrive"
40 Bombay wraps
41 Things to crack
44 Banks on the Cubs, once
45 Common seaweed
46 Nintendo rival
47 Acting ruler
49 Eve's third
51 Chinese sauce
52 Concession
54 Golfer Woosnam
56 Things to beat
65 1958 Pulitzer winner
66 Chop __
67 Do road work
68 Criticize harshly
69 Last word in a threat
70 Cosmetician Lauder
71 California valley
72 Boozers
73 Writer of "Still Me"

DOWN

1 Arcturus or Dubhe
2 Folk wisdom
3 Oil cartel
4 Burgundy wine
5 Egyptian beetle
6 Tent stakes
7 Ms. Bombeck
8 Casual coinages
9 "Love Me __"
10 Skater Lipinski
11 Sign of things to come
12 Projecting tooth
13 Meal scraps
21 Serious play
22 Bang-up time
25 Highland games pole
26 Before, before
27 Pitchfork tine
29 Thelonious Sphere __
30 Home of llamas
32 Flat, tangled masses
33 City in Provence
34 Artist Rivera
35 Analyze chemically
37 Muskogee native
39 Up for the job
42 Have a feeling
43 Of vision
48 Chucks
50 Type of top
53 Sao __, Brazil
55 Scandinavian
56 Deep singer
57 Jamaican citrus fruit
58 Line of stitches
59 Half: pref.
60 Twiggy home
61 Indigo and anil
62 Blanchett of "Elizabeth"
63 Ukraine's capital
64 Koko's dagger

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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M	O	O	C	H	■	C	A	R	O	■	E	T	R	E
M	A	C	A	O	■	A	L	E	X	■	R	H	E	A
A	R	K	■	D	E	L	L	A	S	T	R	E	E	T
■	■	Y	I	E	L	D	■	■	C	A	I	R	N	S
A	C	R	O	S	S	■	S	C	O	R	N	■	■	■
L	E	O	N	I	■	B	O	H	R	■	E	D	I	T
A	D	A	■	A	V	E	N	U	E	S	■	I	D	O
R	E	D	S	■	E	L	A	M	■	H	A	S	O	N
■	■	■	E	G	G	A	R	■	P	I	C	K	L	E
A	N	G	L	E	E	■	■	B	I	P	E	D	■	■
G	O	A	L	I	T	H	E	W	A	Y	■	R	I	P
L	I	V	E	■	A	U	R	A	■	A	S	I	D	E
E	R	I	C	■	T	R	O	N	■	R	I	V	E	R
T	E	N	K	■	E	L	S	A	■	D	R	E	A	M

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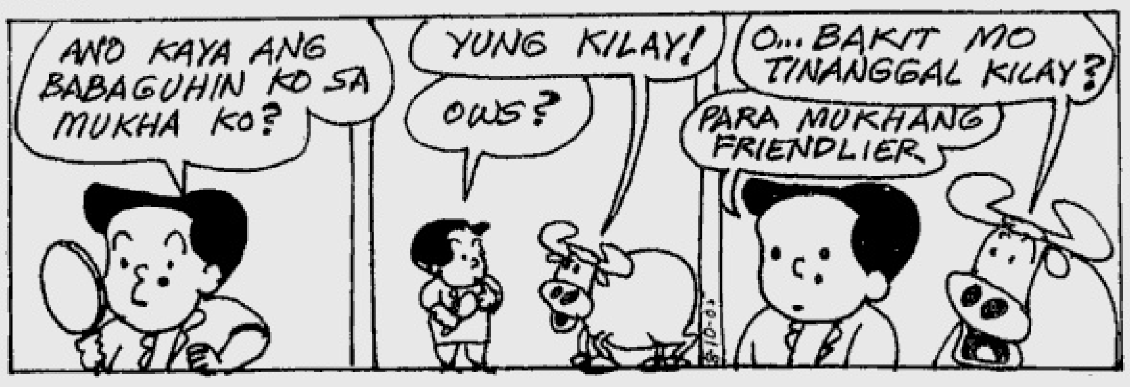
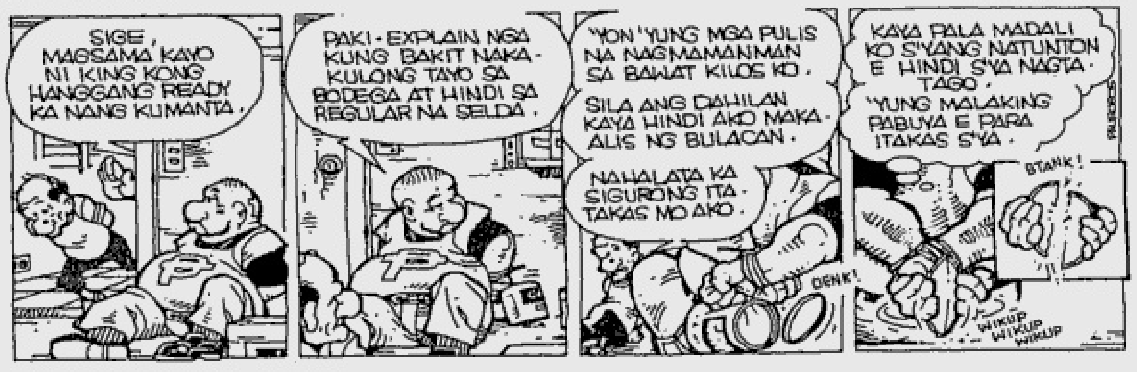
8/10/05

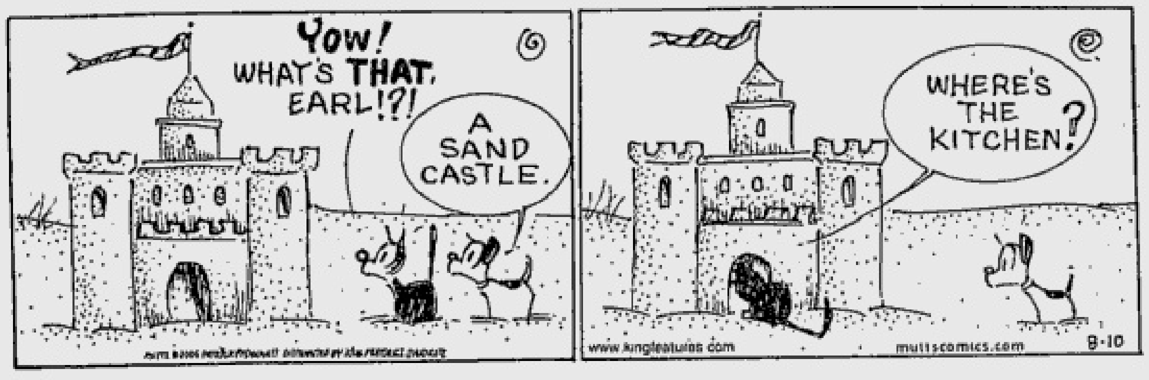
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ANO KAYA ANG BABAGUHIN KO SA MUKHA KO?
YUNG KILAY!
OWS?
O... BAKIT MO TINANGGAL KILAY?
PARA MUKHANG FRIENDLIER
8-10-05

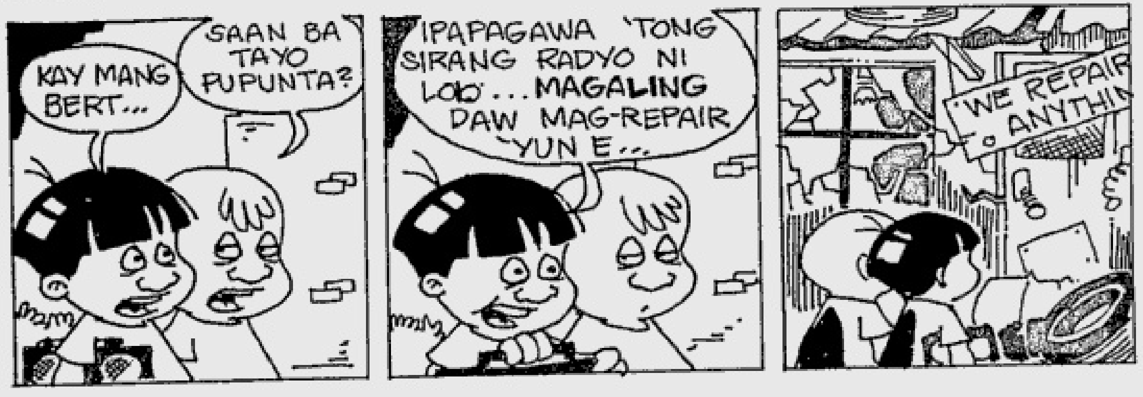
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


SIGE, MAGSAMA KAYO NI KING KONG HANGGANG READY KA NANG KUMANTA.
PAKI-EXPLAIN NGA KUNG BAKIT NAKAKULONG TAYO SA BODEGA AT HINDI SA REGULAR NA SELDA.
'YON 'YUNG MGA PULIS NA NAGMAMANMAN SA BAWAT KILOS KO.
SILA ANG DAHILAN KAYA HINDI AKO MAKAALIS NG BULACAN.
NAHALATA KA SIGURONG ITATAKAS MO AKO.
KAYA PALA MADALI KO S'YANG NATUNTON E HINDI S'YA NAGTATAGO.
'YUNG MALAKING PABUYA E PARA ITAKAS S'YA.
DENK!
BTANK!
WIKUP WIKUP WIKUP

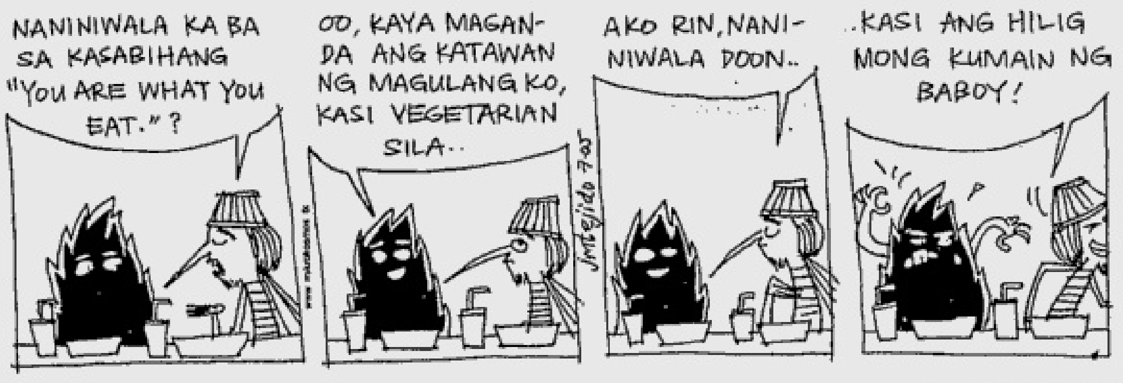
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOW! WHAT'S THAT, EARL!?!
A SAND CASTLE.
WHERE'S THE KITCHEN?
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
8-10

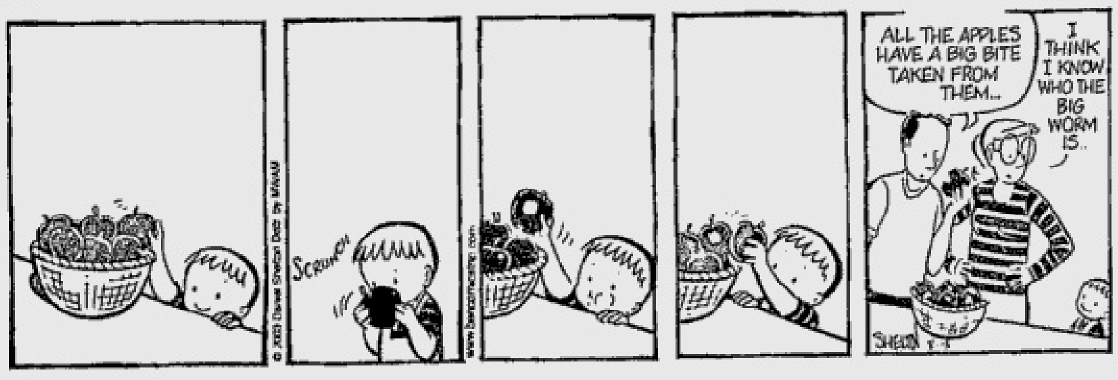
KAMOTE BY RICKY BARBOZA


SAAN BA TAYO PUPUNTA?
KAY MANG BERT...
IPAPAGAWA 'TONG SIRANG RADYO NI LOLO... MAGALING DAW MAG-REPAIR 'YUN E...
"WE REPAIR ANYTHIN

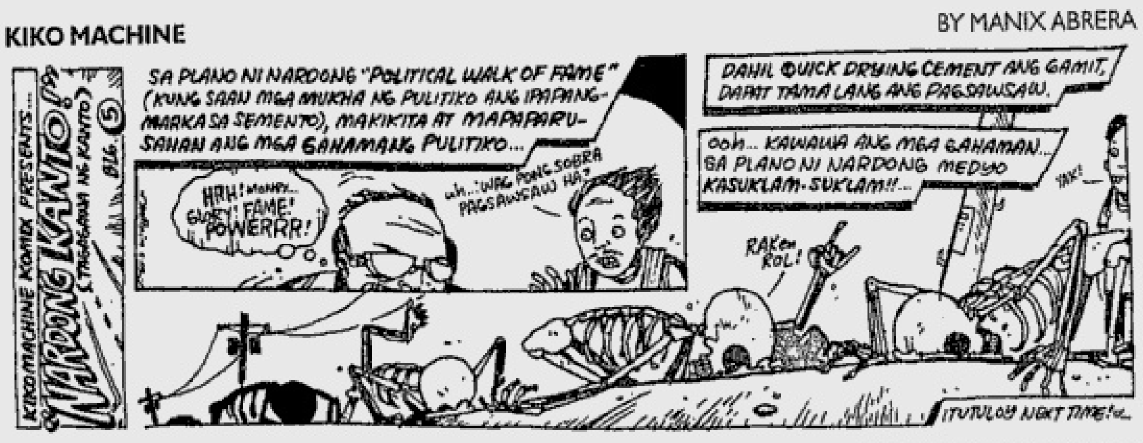
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NANINIWALA KA BA SA KASABIHANG "YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT."?
OO, KAYA MAGANDA ANG KATAWAN NG MAGULANG KO, KASI VEGETARIAN SILA..
AKO RIN, NANINIWALA DOON..
..KASI ANG HILIG MONG KUMAIN NG BABOY!

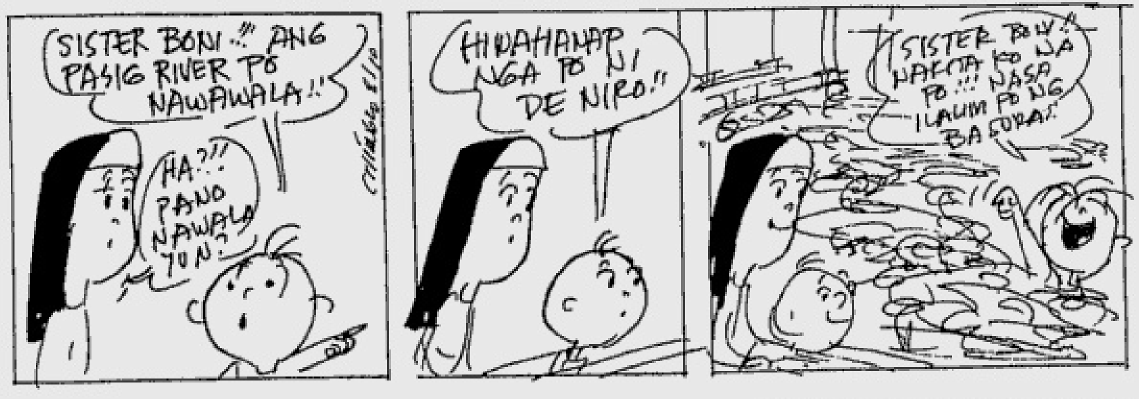
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


SCRUNCH
ALL THE APPLES HAVE A BIG BITE TAKEN FROM THEM...
I THINK I KNOW WHO THE BIG WORM IS.

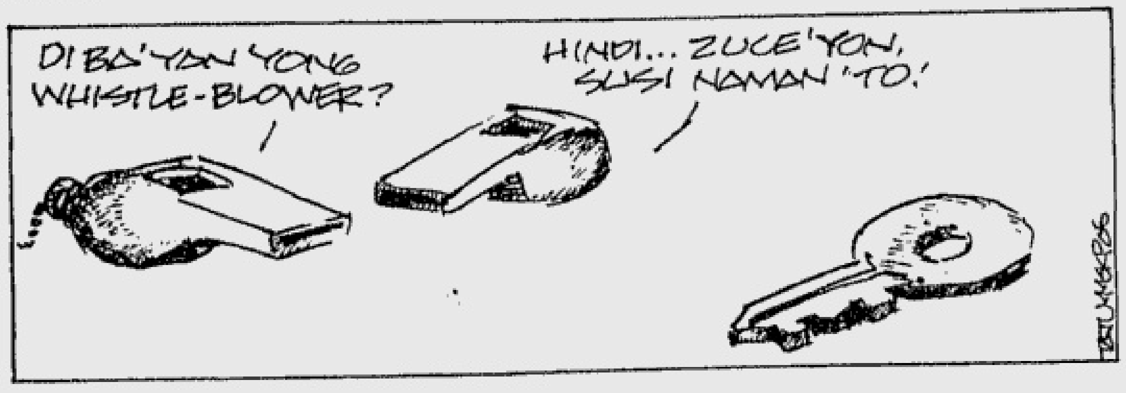
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

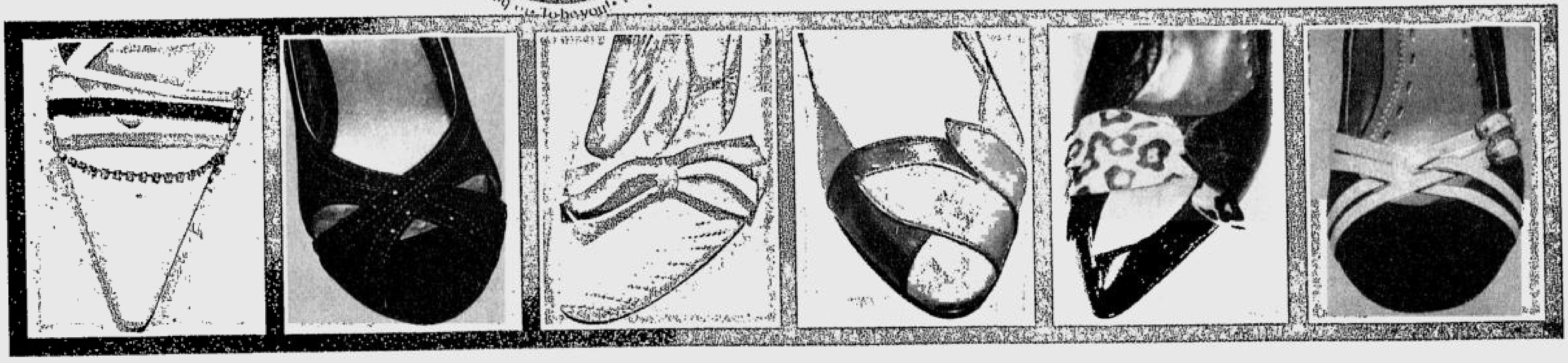

KIKOMACHINE KOMIX PRESENTS... NARDONG KANTO! (TAGAPAGLIGTAS NG KANTO) BLG. 5
SA PLANO NI NARDONG "POLITICAL WALK OF FAME" (KUNG SAAN MGA MUKHA NG PULITIKO ANG IPAPANGMARKA SA SEMENTO), MAKIKITA AT MAPAPARUSAHAN ANG MGA GANAMANG PULITIKO...
HRH! MONEY.. GLORY! FAME! POWERRR!
uh..: WAG PONG SOBRA PAGSAWSAW HA?
DAHIL QUICK DRYING CEMENT ANG GAMIT, DAPAT TAMA LANG ANG PAGSAWSAW.
ooh... KAWAWA ANG MGA GAHAMAN.. SA PLANO NI NARDONG MEDYO KASUKLAM-SUKLAM!!...
YAK!
RAKen ROL!
ITUTULOY NEXT TIME!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

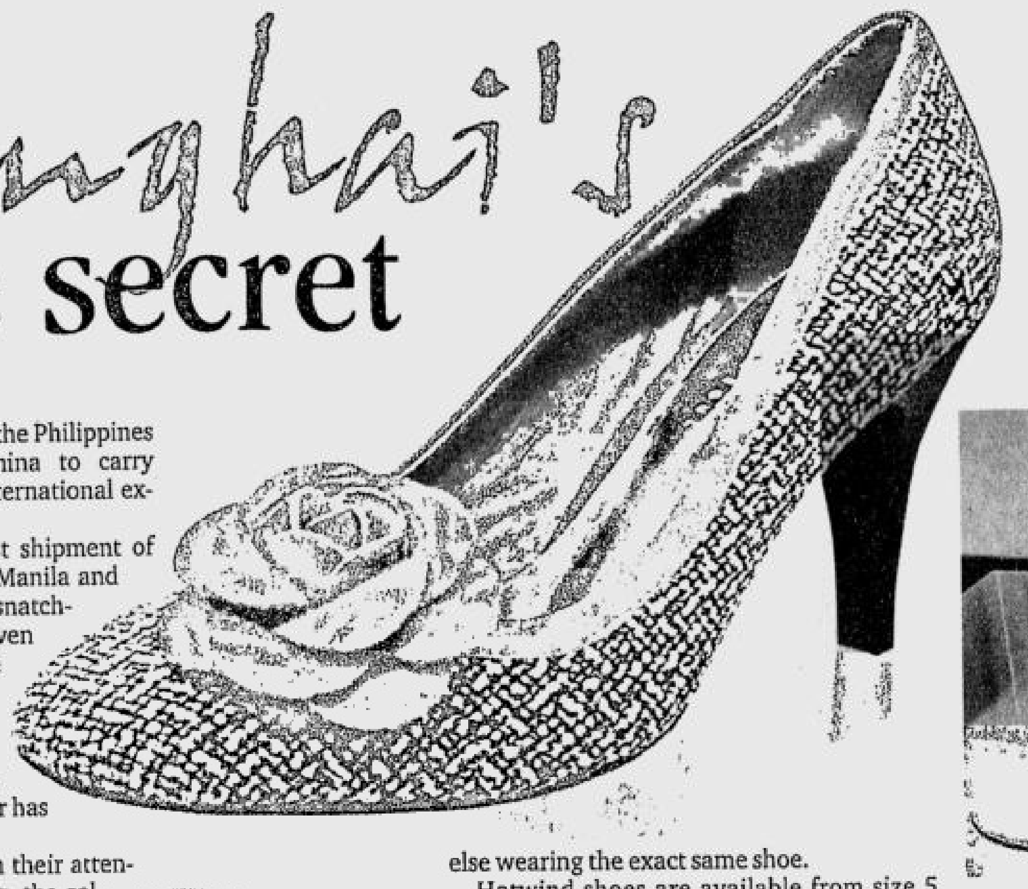

SISTER BONI..!! ANG PASIG RIVER PO NAWAWALA!!
HA?!! PANO NAWALA YUN?
HINAHANAP NGA PO NI DE NIRO!!
SISTER BONI! NAKITA KO NA PO!!! NASA ILALIM PO NG BASURA!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DI BA 'YAN YONG WHISTLE-BLOWER?
HINDI... ZUCE 'YON, SUSI NAMAN 'TO!



Shanghai's sole secret



THE CHARM is in the detail. Hotwind offers traditional shoes with a twist.

From page E1

off. They succeeded in making the Philippines the first country outside China to carry Hotwind. "This is their first international export," Andrea said.

Three weeks ago, their first shipment of 400 hundred pairs arrived in Manila and women have already started snatching them up. There were even pairs that were sold out on the first day.

The shoes can be described as fun, modern, feminine and sophisticated. They come in traditional shapes but each pair has a twist.

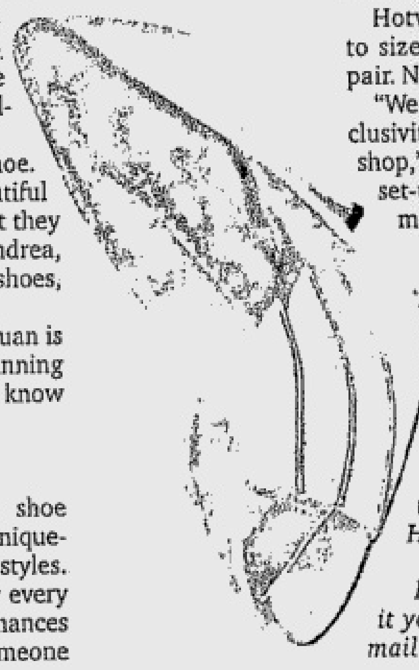
And this brand's charm is in their attention to detail. The added bling, the colorful ribbon, the leather flower, the glittery strip, the stitching that matches the inside of the shoe perfectly, even the scalloped design on the sole.

"They don't stop at just making the shoe. They don't have to make the inside beautiful because you're just gonna step on it but they do that. They really think about it," Andrea, who has a dozen pairs of Hotwind shoes, said.

Even Preview editor Pauline Suaco-Juan is a fan. "On days when I know I'll be running around, I wear Hotwind because I know they're comfortable," she said.

Unique

Another thing that would attract shoe lovers to the store is its promise of uniqueness. "We don't carry a lot of the same styles. There's only one pair for each size for every style," Andrea said. That lessens your chances of walking into a party and spotting someone else wearing the exact same shoe.



Hotwind shoes are available from size 5 to size 9, at around P2,500 to P3,000 per pair. New styles will come in every month.

"We still want to maintain the brand's exclusivity, we want to be almost like a secret shop," said Andrea. "This is an experimental set-up. The long-term plan is to be in a mall."

The store, which was designed by Junie Rodriguez, is comfortably elegant, pretty much like the brand itself.

Hotwind is located at the 2/F Nail Spa, Unit 106 First Midland Condominium 109 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Store hours are from 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., open Monday to Saturday. Call 0915-9999466 or text HOTWIND to 2355.

Do you want The Fashion Freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.

Shopping for a cause

A shopping race boosts volunteerism

By Rhiz J. Binas, Roxanne Gay S. Nofies, Jeffrey Azor-Osoc
2bU! Interns

HANDS on Manila (HOM) Foundation Inc. and PriceSmart Philippines Inc. are collaborating in fostering volunteerism.

For its 4th anniversary, PriceSmart has formed a partnership with HOM in launching the Volunteer In Person (VIP) Day, a grand celebration of the spirit of volunteerism set for October.

Vicente Cruz, PriceSmart warehouse manager, helped launch the partnership last July 27 at the The Fort. The event saw the Media Supermarket Race.

Cynthia Torres, PriceSmart general manager, explained how the race project would benefit charitable institutions. "Our aim is to be able to tell the public how they can participate in nation-building in some other ways and not just in running for office," she said.

Junie Del Mundo, a trustee of HOM and this year's VIP Day chair, said the media are a partner in expanding volunteerism. "We wanted the media to know how it is to give, having done something for others," he said.

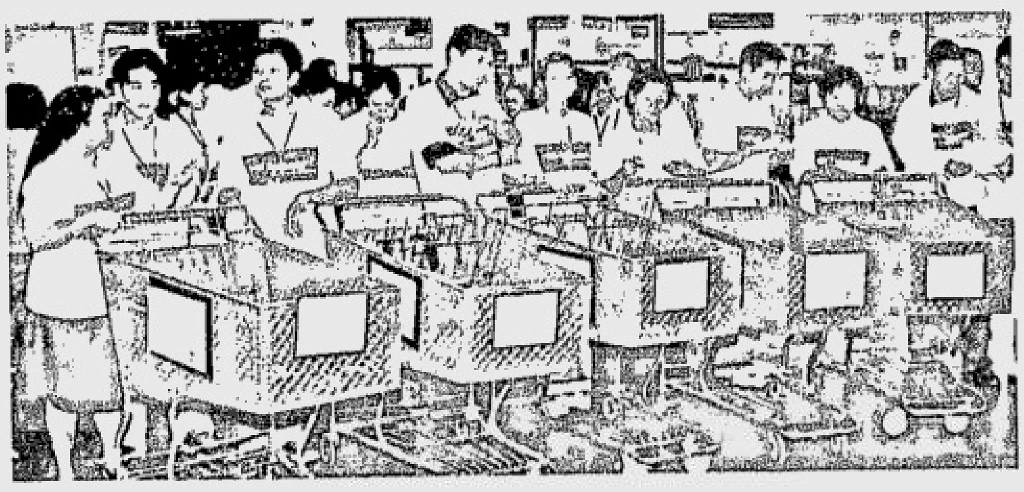
In the race, 10 teams with three members each (one national media representative, one campus media representative and an NGO-partner representative) were given a P10,000 budget by PriceSmart. They used the money to purchase goods to be donated to an NGO-partner. Each team was given a shopping cart and the list of the items which they needed to buy in 10 minutes. They should not exceed their budget.

Campus media representatives included students from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines in Taguig, Asia Pacific College and Don Bosco College.

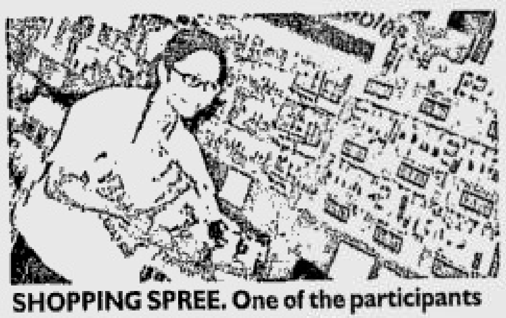
Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries were the Asilio de San Vicente de Paul, Bahay Maria Children Center, Holy Family Homes for Girls Makati Foundation Inc., Jesus Loves the Little Children Foundation, Kaibigan Outreach Center Foundation, Nazareth Homes, Pangarap Shelter Foundation, Street Dwellers, Tahanan Sta. Luisita and Tuloy sa Don Bosco Foundation Inc.

Jeffrey Osoc, who represented INQUIRER-2bU!, Jomar Floyd Arroyo, a 2nd year B.S. Chemical Engineering student at the Asia Pacfic College and Ed Lorenzo, an educator and NGO representative from Pangarap Shelter Foundation, comprised one of the teams.



ON YOUR mark, get set, shop. Teams get ready to zoom down the supermarket's aisles. (Far left) The winners: Jeffrey and Ed of Team Pangarap Shelter rushing to beat the clock



SHOPPING SPREE. One of the participants grabs goods off the shelves.

CONTESTANTS show just how much fun giving can be.

Their strategy was simple: they put bandanas on their heads so they wouldn't lose sight of one another and they divided the shopping assignment for faster shopping.

Soon, all 10 teams were zooming down the supermarket aisles in search of their goods.

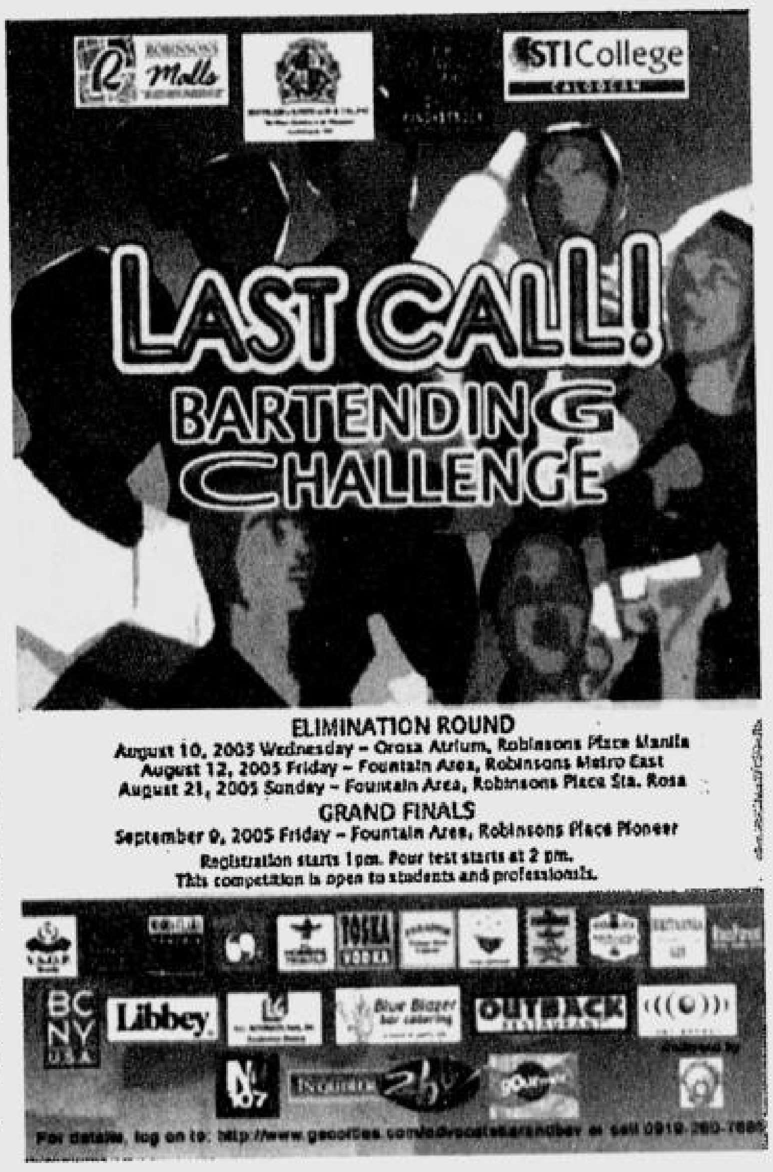
Ten minutes ended quickly for the shoppers. They were asked to sit back as their items were checked and evaluated.

Jeffrey, Jomar and Ed—Team Pangarap Shelter—emerged victorious, with their grocery totalling P8, 774.10. Their efficient budgeting and fast movement allowed them to bag the prize. But according to them, winning was only a second priority. They knew it was more important to purchase the items for their NGO-partner.

The rest of the teams were asked to continue shopping so they could maximize their P10,000 budget.

The Supermarket Race was just the kick-off event to launch Hands On Manila's VIP day.

It was a great day for giving. And it was only the beginning.



LAST CALL! BARTENDING CHALLENGE

ELIMINATION ROUND
August 10, 2005 Wednesday – Orosa Atrium, Robinsons Place Manila
August 12, 2005 Friday – Fountain Area, Robinsons Metro East
August 21, 2005 Sunday – Fountain Area, Robinsons Place Sta. Rosa
GRAND FINALS
September 9, 2005 Friday – Fountain Area, Robinsons Place Pioneer
Registration starts 1pm. Pour test starts at 2 pm.
This competition is open to students and professionals.

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2 days
24/7
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3 Ways to enjoy 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite:

1. Buy the NEW 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite mini call cards in authorized Sun dealers and outlets. The call cards are packaged as two but can be bought individually at P20.00 each. If you have purchased a card without a plastic wrapper, make sure that the gray protective label has not been tampered with.
2. Purchase 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite via The Mall in your Sun cellphone. Visit The Mall then click Mall Assistant>My Account>Prepaid>Buy 24/7 and choose TU 2.
3. Purchase 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite via SMS. Text **TU<space>2** and send to **247**. Texting to 247 is free of charge.

P20
2 days
24/7
TEXT
UNLIMITED
P20
2 days
sun
sun

NOTES:

- After texting the keywords to 247 or choosing 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite in The Mall, you will receive a text message containing the number series ***220#** followed by a 14-digit number string. Just load up in two ways:

  - Key in ***220#** followed by the 14-digit number string then the # sign. Ensure that there are no spaces between characters then press SEND.

  OR

  - Dial **220**, press **1** then enter the 14-digit number string.

  For security purposes, it is best to load up immediately after you receive the 14-digit number string. You will need a minimum of P20, (exclusive of Convert-a-Load in your account) to purchase 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite via SMS or through The Mall.

- Upon successful loading you will immediately receive a text message reflecting your updated balances and 24/7 Text Unlimited expiry. Real-time loading, no need to wait!
- Should your regular load balance reach zero after loading up 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite via text, you can only send local Sun-to-Sun texts. To call and text subscribers on other networks, simply load up a regular Sun Cellular Prepaid call card.
- 24/7 loads have separate and distinct validity periods from regular Sun Cellular Prepaid loads.

choose from these 24/7 unlimited choices

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	P 50 P 150	7 days 30 days
	P 100 P 350	7 days 30 days

Applicable to local Sun-to-Sun calls & texts.

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